The New REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOLUME XII New York, Saturday, November 10, 1917 Number 158

Contents

Editorial Notes 29

Leading Editorials
- The Price of Victory 32
- To Encourage Trade with Neutrals 34
- The Bigelow Incident 35
- A Railroad Policy 37

General Articles
- The One Thing Needful, II ..... William Hard 39
- Mobilizing the Billboards ..... Lee Simonson 41
- Political Revolt in the Northwest, II .... Charles Merz 44
- Education for the Future ..... Charles P. Howland 46

A Communication 48

Correspondence 49

Verse 51

Reviews of Books
- Six American Poets ..... F. H. 52
- The Wonder ..... E. C. P. 53
- Recent Publications 56

THE victory for woman's suffrage in New York State can fairly be described as one of the most extraordinary and decisive achievements in the history of American politics. It is extraordinary because the large number of referenda taken on the suffrage question in the different states of the Union have proved to the hilt the sheer dense inertia with which the majority of men in the older communities have opposed the granting of votes to women. It seemed almost impossible to break through their masculine complacency and stab them into interest in and sympathy with the political aspirations of their wives, mothers and daughters. Yet the feat has been accomplished in the most populous and one of the most conservative American states. Within two years, what was apparently a fifty-seven per cent majority against suffrage has been converted into a fifty-four per cent majority in its favor, and the result has been accomplished by the hard, thorough, intelligent and devoted work of a fine and able band of women. Many people are attributing the success of the suffrage agitation in New York to the awakening and dislocation of ideas produced by the war, but no such awakening took place in Ohio. The difference between the results in Ohio and New York must be traced almost entirely to the difference between the ability and the inability to build up a serviceable and adequate political organization. If ever in the history of democratic institutions the disfranchised part of the population have earned the opportunity of exercising the privilege claimed by them it is the women of New York State. The vote has not been conferred upon them by the uninstructed good nature or good sense of the New York male electorate. They have conquered it by the skilful and spirited use of the very political weapons which in the opinion of their opponents they are incompetent to wield. No state political organization in the American Union contains half the political ability and intelligence of the group of suffrage workers who under the leadership of Mrs. Norman Whitehouse have succeeded in enfranchising at one stroke a tenth of all American women.

BESIDES being extraordinary, touching and convincing the victory for equal suffrage in New York State is decisive. Its effect upon similar contests elsewhere in the Union will be prodigious, but the women of the other states should not and will not be obliged to repeat the exhausting and harassing struggle of their sisters in New York. The submission of the Federal Amendment has been made politically inevitable, and hereafter the efforts of the suffragist workers all over the country should and will be concentrated upon the job of getting it passed by Congress with the least possible delay and accepted by the states. The enfranchisement of women on the same terms and to the same extent as the enfranchisement of men deserves to be incorporated in the Fundamental Law of the American nation as a vital principle of the American democracy. Nothing less will satisfy the profound sense which this war has brought with it of a joint responsibility for the welfare of society which must

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

not be impaired by distinctions of class or sex. The recognition of that principle will ultimately give to the relations between men and women a new meaning. They will hereafter be held together not only by bonds of affection and passion, not only in the task of building homes and raising families, but in the arduous work of political and social construction. Every phase of their relationship will be intensified and liberalized by the effect of adding to it a common absorption in the practical promotion of disinterested social purposes.

NEW YORK has followed the bad example of Chicago and Philadelphia. Its voters have elected a candidate for mayor who represents a combination between a particularly ignorant and vicious political machine and a wholly unscrupulous brand of yellow journalism. Its offense superficially is even more serious than that of Chicago and Philadelphia, because by electing Judge Hylan it repudiated a man who during his term as Mayor had been peculiarly intelligent and uncompromising in his attempt to give the city a good administration. Worst of all it has repudiated Mayor Mitchel quite as much because of the excellence of his administration as because of his mistakes. His efforts to improve the schools, the financial methods, the civil service, the police and the charitable institutions all aroused the opposition's powerful interests which profited from the abuses, and these interests have been an important factor in defeating him for reëlection. During a great crisis in the affairs of the nation when the penalty of incompetence and ill-will in the conduct of public business is likely to be severer than ever before in American political experience, the government of our largest city is turned over to a representative of some of the most dubious elements in the community. New York City will be lucky if in following the example of Chicago and Philadelphia it does not gather a harvest of similarly deplorable consequences.

MAYOR MITCHEL, however, was not defeated merely because he aroused by his administrative reforms the opposition of powerful and numerous special interests. Neither did the voters of New York in electing Judge Hylan deliberately shun the light and prefer political depravity. They have never been properly instructed in what Mayor Mitchel and his associates have accomplished on behalf of better government, and their mind has been closed to such instruction from causes similar to those which prevented the voters of New York State from appreciating the merits of the new constitution, which was recently submitted to their approval. If the cause of sound administration is ever to obtain popular support, it must be associated with a social program and must be presented so as to awaken popular sympathy and interest. This Mayor Mitchel and his supporters largely failed to do. Four years ago he polled fifty-eight per cent of the votes cast for the office of Mayor. On Tuesday last he received less than twenty-five per cent. No matter how deplorable the results of such a revolution in popular sentiment, no one who has any faith in political democracy can attribute it merely to the machinations of clever and unscrupulous political leaders. If the people turned against Mayor Mitchel so emphatically, the revolution must to a very considerable extent be the fault of Mayor Mitchel and his advisers. It was not only their business to govern the city well, but to govern it in such a way as to keep the confidence of the people who elected them.

UNFORTUNATELY, however, the Mayor and his associates were confined in their ideas and sympathies by fatal class limitations. The Mayor's supporters failed to understand the chief cause and the extent of the popular dissatisfaction with the Mitchel administration. They failed until near the end to divine how successful the Mayor's enemies had been in fastening on him the stigma of being a rich man's candidate, and until too late they did nothing to break the force of this popular impression. Certain acts in the Mayor's record and his personal preoccupation with administrative rather than social problems supplied the accusation with a measure of plausibility. If he was to have any chance of election the Mayor's supporters should have employed all their energy and ingenuity from the beginning of the campaign to protect his candidacy from this danger, but neither the Mayor himself nor his advisers seemed to realize how serious it was. He insisted on soliciting votes chiefly as a man who was a better patriot than the other candidates, but he never succeeded in making this issue plausible and popular. On the contrary by claiming that his opponents were only miscreants and traitors he probably lost more votes than he gained. It must be remembered he was talking to an audience who had come to question his political honesty. Mayor Mitchel has, unfortunately, always lacked a sympathetic understanding of popular feeling and needs and he has never possessed much social vision. At the critical moment he was unable to convey to the mass of his poorer fellow citizens either how intelligently and disinterestedly he had served them or how sincerely he desired their welfare. The Mayor's defeat means undoubtedly to the majority of people who voted against him a victory for democracy and popular government. They will be disillusioned later, but

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it would be a grave political mistake not to recognize their good faith. Most of the Hylan and Hillquit support consisted of undiluted anti-Mitchel votes, cast by men who resented the attempt made by one whom they took to be a class candidate to set himself up as the only pure and undefiled embodiment of patriotism.

MR. HILLQUIT is unduly optimistic in interpreting the huge increase in the Socialist vote as proof that the Socialist party has been established as "an important and permanent factor in the politics of the city." There is every reason for believing that the proportion of convinced socialists in the Hillquit vote was minor. Men voted for Hillquit chiefly because they were either opposed to the war, or at any rate opposed to the way in which the war in its civil relations is being handled. To vote for Hillquit was the only practicable method of protesting against any of the administration policies. The fact that one-fifth of the voters of New York City should thus emphatically register their dissatisfaction calls for serious consideration on the part of those responsible for the conduct of the war. But that fact indicates a healthy situation. So far as it goes, it gives evidence of an important body of opinion that will not be suppressed or forced into a passive acquiescence in the dictates of the majority, but which, if it is not in the future to grow into an obstacle to the government's purposes, must be conciliated by adherence to a sounder policy and methods.

FUTURE embroilment between the United States and Japan is a danger that has been practically eliminated through the Ishii-Lansing agreement. So long as Japan's special interests in China were unrecognized, it was inevitable that every move by Americans toward the commercial and industrial development of China should be viewed with suspicion in Japan. Commercial penetration has normally been the first step in imperialistic enterprise, and such enterprise on the part of any western nation in China would necessarily have endangered the peace of Japan. We cherished no designs upon China, but so long as we failed to recognize the claims of Japan to a special position in China, it was impossible for Japan to be entirely easy about our intentions. Furthermore, so long as we refused to recognize the Japanese claim, Japan's prospect of a general recognition of her position by all the Powers was slight. The agreement assures the open door and the territorial integrity and political independence of China. There is no reason for doubting that this assurance is given by Japan in good faith. So long as there was a likelihood that other Powers might violate the integrity of China, Japan had grounds in self-preservation for a policy of territorial encroachments. So long as Chinese diplomacy could play Japan off against the Western Powers Japan had grounds for political intervention. These grounds have been removed, so far as the United States are concerned. And with the essential relations of the two nations established on a basis of cordial understanding, it may be expected that they will be able to coöperate far more effectively than hitherto toward the winning of the war.

AT a time like the present, when the freedom of public discussion, so essential to the vitality of democratic institutions, is curtailed in so many necessary and unnecessary ways, it is reassuring to record one instance of its scrupulous preservation. In spite of the suppression of some of their organs and the threatened suppression of others, the Socialist candidate for mayor has not been denied in any respect an opportunity to present his case to the voters of New York City. Mr. Hillquit has frankly appealed for the votes of those citizens who have doubts about the war and who are demanding immediate negotiations for peace, and he has not been molested in uttering this appeal. He has to be sure carefully refrained from denouncing the war, as it was denounced in the Socialist party platform, and he has disclaimed any desire to bring about a separate peace, but his speeches have contained assertions almost identical with those for which Socialist papers have already been suppressed. Thus both the government and the Socialist leaders have behaved with a creditable forbearance which has served to indicate the limits and the terms of a possible future agreement between them. The Socialist papers might be allowed to go as far as the Socialist speakers have been allowed to go, but they should not be allowed to advocate any course of behavior which hinders the government in the prosecution of the war or the execution of the war legislation. A treaty ought to be made on this basis—one which would no doubt be difficult subsequently to observe, but which would work, providing both the Socialists and the government continue to be as forbearing as they were during the campaign.

GERMAN retirement from the positions in the south bank of the Ailette is encouraging evidence of the present military preponderance of the Allies. On this sector the Germans held the superior positions last spring, but the French gradually pushed them back until the superiority of position turned against the Germans. After vain

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

efforts to reverse the process the Germans have retired to new ground, where they will again hold the better positions. But while their retirement completes the proof that the Allies possess the power to force the Germans back, it also gives an indication of the stupendous work ahead of the Allies in expelling the Germans from France and Belgium. The territory behind the present line consists of one series of strong positions after another. When the Germans are ousted from one series, they will fall back to another, and so slow is the movement of this kind of warfare that the new positions may be as carefully prepared as the old. Possibly they may sometime be caught in the act of retiring and severely handled, but so far as we now can foresee, they will usually be able to get away with all their men and guns. The Allies, being under the necessity of gaining ground, must give battle on unfavorable ground as well as favorable. The Germans, having no illusions about holding ground, need accept the challenge of the Allies only under favorable conditions. Evidently this German advantage would be greatly reduced if the Allies could follow up one offensive so promptly with another that German calculations as to new positions would be frequently upset.

The Price of Victory

SINCE the recent defeat of the Italian army, American critics have been frank in condemning the Allied military command for permitting such a reverse to happen. As they see it, the Italian disaster, like the defeat of Russia in 1915, the failure at Gallipoli, the over-running of Serbia and the crushing of Rumania, could have been avoided or averted; and they attribute this succession of defeat to the lack of any sufficient military coöperation among the members of the anti-German coalition. The New York Times, for instance, ascribes the Italian debacle to the failure of the French-English staff to adopt the Italian plan of carrying on the war by attacking Austria from the south. The Chicago Tribune speaks more boldly and more to the point. "Unless the Allied Powers can harmonize their military projects and pull together, the war will be prolonged till we are all bled to death and Europe is a graveyard. There should be constituted at once a grand council of war equivalent to the German general staff. This body should be empowered absolutely to control the strategy of the Allied Powers." The New York Tribune is no less emphatic. It proposes "unity of command in all directions and concentration of forces on a single front"; "a pooling of all military resources, and agreement for the subordination of all national schemes to an Allied plan and the formulation of a concerted program for the operations of 1918."

The excellence of this advice can scarcely be disputed. If the Allies could have pooled their resources in men and materials and centralized their command as the Central Powers have done, they would not only have saved themselves many costly set-backs, but they would by this time in all probability have forced Germany to sue for peace. But excellent as is the advice and often as it should be repeated it is far from novel. French and British critics have from the start been clamoring for unity of military command, and the British government has repeatedly made sincere, if unsuccessful efforts to obtain it. Yet in spite of the manifest advantages of unified command, in spite of the costly reverses which were clearly to be attributed to its absence, in spite of efforts which have been made to obtain it, the anti-German coalition has been as unsuccessful as past coalitions have been in securing singleness of military policy and celerity and energy of military action. Moreover, this failure must be attributed to an underlying cause, whose efficacy will not be impaired by clamoring, no matter how persistently and justifiably, for centralization of military authority. The infirmities and disharmony of the Allied strategy are the symptoms of a still more radical and costly disorganization, which, as long as it is allowed to endure, places insuperable obstacles in the way of a unified military control and compromises the ultimate success of the Allied policy.

The underlying cause of the military disasters of the Allies is not only multiplicity of military control but divergence of political purpose. The attempts made to bring about military coöperation have failed or have insufficiently succeeded, because so many members of the alliance cherished special political objects which seemed to them of more importance than the common object of defeating German military aggression. These special political objects, which sometimes were as dubious as they were exclusive, have had a decisive effect on the military policy of the several governments. They have tended to use their armies not for the purpose of coöperating with their Allies in striking at the weakest point in the German line, or in taking every care to concentrate against their most dangerous enemy which has always been the German army, but in military operations intended chiefly to serve their own particular national political objects. And it was the pursuit of these special national objects which has not only prevented them from concentrating on their main job of defeating the German army, but which exposed their military forces to one triumphant German attack after another.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

During 1915 Russia's Balkan policy, which at the time was aggressively imperialistic like that of Germany, was partly responsible for the worst military and political failure of the Allies. The Russian forces instead of being concentrated for the purpose of attacking or resisting its most dangerous enemy, the German army, were distributed for the purpose of occupying territory coveted by the Russian government. Their reserves of ammunition were dissipated in fighting which did not sufficiently contribute to a decisive military result. In the spring, consequently, the German army drove a fatal breach into the over-extended Russian lines and dealt the Russian military organization a blow from which it has never been able to rally. Doubtless the Germans and Austrians could in any event have forced the Russians back, but if the Russian military policy had been more preoccupied with fighting the German army, and less with occupying Galician and Hungarian territory, the Russian army might well have been able to hold some such line as that of the Vistula and to have made their German-Austrian enemy pay far more heavily for its successful attacks. The Rumanian debacle was another example of the same error. The Rumanian troops were ordered off immediately to occupy Transylvania, and were consequently distributed so as to render themselves particularly vulnerable to the first onslaught of their adversaries. The Rumanian like the Russian government placed the gratification of its own special political objects ahead of the object, shared by all the Allies, of doing the utmost damage to the enemy armies.

The Italian defeat is, perhaps, an even more flagrant example of the same mistake. In the words of the Chicago Tribune, General Cadorna "pushed ahead and extended his line until a blow could fracture it. He left his left flank weakly supported and it has been turned with the result not only that his hard earned gains have been lost but his positions in the Julian Alps have been swept away." The presence of the French and English troops and guns would not have averted the disaster. As Mr. Frank Simonds points out, they would have been used in the centre of the line rather than on the flank. Cadorna was outgeneraled because he was thinking less of the enemy army than of the occupation of territory which his own government wished to conquer and permanently to hold. It was seeking in particular to gain possession of Trieste and the Slavic hinterland, for Italy was well aware of the opposition in some of the Allied countries to its designs on Trieste. In negotiating for permanent possession it hoped to secure the advantage derived from military occupation. Thus the pursuit of a doubtful and exclusive political object gave birth to a weak and dangerous military policy, the collapse of which has converted the Italian army into an inter-Allied liability and diminished the power of the French and English armies to attack in full force on the French and Flemish front.

Surely the moral of these repeated defeats, all associated with the pursuit by members of the Allied coalition of special political objects, speaks for itself. Centralization of military control must be born of unity of political purpose. The Allies have not been able to concentrate their armed forces on the all-important object of annihilating German military power, because they cherished different and in some respects divergent opinions as to the political objects for which a general victory should be used. Divergent political objects are not merely a source of danger, because they impair the internal unity of different members of the alliance, but because they have prevented the adoption of a common military policy and of a centralized military control. The common military object of defeating the German army has been subordinated to the special political object of occupying coveted territory, and not until these special political objects have been subordinated to the attainment of political objects which all the Allies share in common, will a political condition be brought into existence favorable to the effective and triumphant coöperation of the Allied armies.

This obvious lesson of the Italian disaster has, consequently, an immediate and an important bearing upon the task of the approaching inter-Allied conference in Paris. The conference was summoned to discuss and agree upon a joint military policy for the campaign of 1918. There have been some intimations that it would attempt to reach a better agreement in respect to political purposes, but it has been doubtful how far such a political discussion will be allowed to go. If any such doubt lingers, it should be immediately dispelled. A frank discussion of political purposes and a full published agreement in reference to them is demanded both as a necessary condition of the moral endurance of the Allied nations, in case the war is prolonged, and as an indispensable condition of speedy and substantial military success. By reaching such an agreement the Allies would be forming themselves into a community, united not only by inexorable hostility to German militarism but by the deeper cohesion of a common positive political program. They would be redeeming in the only way it can ultimately be redeemed their enforced appeal to the instrument of war and to the vindication of military victory. War has been defined as "the pursuit of a political object by other means." In the absence of "a clear definition of political ob-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ject," it becomes, as Mr. A. F. Whyte says in a recent article in the "New Europe," which is the most intelligent and uncompromising supporter of the Allied cause published abroad, "sheer, senseless slaughter." From the beginning the Allies have suffered from the obscure, self-contradictory, and the loose definition of their political program. "The march of events," says Mr. Whyte, "is carrying us more and more out of the purely military setting of the past three years into a political atmosphere." "The principal phenomena in Europe are no longer this offensive or that but gigantic political interrogations about the future." "It is high time that our government should define the moral and political ends to which military operations are leading in such a manner as to command the assent of the belligerent Allied democracies."

To Encourage Trade with Neutrals

RESTRICTION is the favorite instrument of government. At least it is the instrument that comes first to hand. It is therefore natural that the initial phase of our war control of foreign trade should have been almost exclusively restrictive in character. Our immediate task was to cut off trade with Holland and Scandinavia that might directly or indirectly serve the military purposes of Germany. How effectively we have worked in this direction is indicated by the fact that total exports from Holland and the three Scandinavian countries for August, 1917, were $10,169,552, as compared with $27,464,952 for August, 1916. Our second task, still in the way of execution, is to reduce the trade with enemy concerns in other parts of the world. Goods shipped to German firms in Chile or Argentina do not, of course, directly increase the military power of Germany. But the profits from such trade furnish means for intrigue. They help to maintain the value of the German mark, and the value of a nation's currency in neutral territory has a moral effect that is not negligible. Furthermore, it is not a matter of indifference to Germany whether her foreign trading agencies are prospering or are backing up against the wall. If their distress becomes serious, this is a reason for hastening the end of the war. Accordingly it cannot be denied that on military grounds we are justified in applying restrictions to trade with neutral states, even far removed from the field of armed conflict, when such trade benefits German subjects who are essentially agents of the Fatherland. We have not, to be sure, adopted a blacklisting policy for the restricting of enemy traders on neutral soil, but it is generally understood that we attain the same end, after a fashion, by control of export licenses.

But restriction of neutral trade is only one side of a rational policy of war control. It is a commonplace of economics that importation is indirect production. We are straining every effort to attain to a maximum production of materials necessary for war and necessary for the operation of our industrial machine. We want as much copper, for example, as we can get. It is important that we should keep the mines on Lake Superior and in the Rocky Mountain states working at full capacity. It is also important that we should keep the mines in Mexico, Chile and Peru working at full time. They work for our Allies and ourselves, just as do our own mines.

If Latin America consisted of wealthy states, we could secure the services of their productive forces on credit, just as England and France and Italy have secured our own productive services on credit. We could raise loans in Latin America and employ the proceeds in paying for what we need. But Latin American countries are borrowers, not lenders. If we want them to produce goods for us—and we cannot well dispense with their nitrates, manganese, rubber, tin, wolfram, hides, wool, coffee, not to mention miscellaneous food products—we have to provide means for payment. They would take our gold, but we cannot afford to part with it. What remains for us, then, but to produce goods that they need or even merely desire, and manage somehow to deliver them?

Our productive resources are mortgaged to the war, it may be said. We have enough to do to produce munitions and supplies for ourselves and our Allies. We have no surplus productive power with which to supply Latin American customers. But this is to ignore the fact that to supply Latin American customers is in effect to produce munitions and supplies for ourselves and our Allies. It is to produce them more economically, at less labor cost, than they could be produced otherwise. We can apply some of our productive power to raising more cattle, or we can apply it to the production of cottons and woolens to be exchanged in Argentina for meat and hides. By the latter method we shall get more meat and hides per unit of productive power. How absurd it would be, then, to neglect exportation to Argentina on the ground that our productive power is mortgaged to the war.

We are capable of absurdities, under the stress of war problems so great that we have not had time to adjust ourselves to them. Not long ago we fell into something of a panic over the shortage

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of wool for the clothing of the army. An order was issued stopping all exports of woolen goods. As it happened, our exporters were just preparing to ship to points south of the equator large quantities of light woolen goods for the spring and summer trade. These goods were naturally of no use to our armies. They would be of no use to the civil population before our own spring and summer, some six months later; and even then, they would not fall into the class of necessaries. Evidently the best way to apply those goods to our own requirements was to ship them to South American markets and take in exchange goods essential to our industry, or credits that we could use later to the national advantage. But the order prohibiting exports applied to all woolens without discrimination. Only after a lapse of considerable time was the exporting trade given to understand that exception would be made of export orders placed before September 25th.

We are talking of cutting off exports of coal to certain Latin American public service corporations of German ownership. Our reason is a sound one. We do not want the Germans to build up credits that may possibly serve their national purposes. We thereby recognize the importance to a nation of building up credits in neutral states. Does it not follow that we ought to exert ourselves to build up credits of our own, that will not only possibly, but certainly, advance our national purposes? The encouragement of desirable export trade to Latin America appears indeed to be of more essential importance to us and to our Allies than the cutting off of undesirable trade.

It may be said that we have not the tonnage to foster Latin American trade. So far as the exports are concerned, there is no validity in the statement. We are doubtless importing from South America some commodities we do not need, and of other commodities amounts in excess of our pressing war needs. By all means, let us restrict importation to what is essential; to what actually increases our power of making war. We shall save tonnage for more important uses. But we shall still have to send enough ships to bring home materials we cannot do without to take care of whatever goods we are ready to export.

Under the executive order of October 14th, constituting the War Trade Board and under the power of the Shipping Board, we are in a position to restrict importation to such articles as we really require. Through this power we can insure ourselves against the waste of tonnage involved in the importation of superfluities. Our export control should properly proceed with caution in licensing shipment abroad of articles we really need at home. But there is little point in prohibiting the exportation of products that we use lavishly at home. We use textile products and manufactures of rubber, for example, in quantities far beyond the actual needs of a nation at war. Automobile tires worn out in domestic joy-riding do not advance our national purposes. Automobile tires shipped to Chile to pay for nitrates may represent the most economical possible means of supplying ourselves with the materials for munitions manufacture. In gross, Latin American trade is a valuable adjunct to the industrial power we are wielding against our enemies. It can be made a more valuable adjunct through the fostering of exports and through a judicious regulation of the character of imports.

The Bigelow Incident

IN the treatment which Herbert Bigelow received at the hands of a mob there is opportunity for one issue to be met squarely. About to address a meeting at Newport, Kentucky, Bigelow was seized by a band of masked men, taken into the woods and, "in the name of the poor women and children of Belgium," beaten with a horse-whip. It is a shameful incident, one which can be used to point out that no matter what views Bigelow held on the war or what sort of meeting he was to address, the treatment which he received was destructive to American political purposes in the war in the same sense that a military defeat might be. Bigelow's case, given wide publicity, offered an opportunity to give concreteness to the President's declaration that we shall "conduct our operations as belligerents without passion and ourselves observe with proud punctilio the principles of right and fair play we profess to be fighting for."

By the press, at least, this opportunity does not seem to have been grasped. In New York City the incident has been practically ignored. The Evening Post was one newspaper which condemned it in plain terms. Several others also published editorials. No apology was offered for Bigelow's whippers. They were rebuked for having taken the law into their own hands. But there was nothing to suggest that Bigelow ought to be permitted to go on with his propaganda—assuming it urged no disobedience to the law—and that in the future it should be met by counter-propaganda, rather than by suppression. The Herald, for instance, with some cynicism remarked that "To be in strict accord with the proprieties it is necessary, of course, to deplore resort to 'lynch law' methods by that body of Cincinnati patriots in its dealings with Mr. Herbert Bigelow." Nor, if the Government again failed the patriots, would this be the last of their activity. "Americans in the past have had no difficulty in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

finding a way to suppress the seditionists in their midst, nor will they have difficulty in that direction in the future. As for Mr. Herbert Bigelow, the counts against him suggest that he was lucky in getting off with a good hiding."

The Evening Sun, also deploring the resort to mob treatment, concluded that, considering Bigelow's activity, he had been "less sinned against than sinning." The Globe was concerned chiefly with Mr. Bigelow's apologists. "Those who are protesting against the Bigelow outrage," it says, "are unfortunate in the framing of their message of rebuke. They acclaim Bigelow as a martyr, but they conspicuously fail to express any indignation in regard to his own black guilt." This guilt is an indifference to German wrongs against Belgium. "To read the protests of LaFollette and his kind," continues the Globe, "Bigelow is a white-winged angel brutally treated because of his virtues. Do our self-called pacifists think they can get away with such stuff?"

Among the self-called pacifists who attempted to, must be classed the Secretary of War. Mr. Baker issued a statement branding Bigelow's treatment as "brutal and cowardly . . . a humiliating contrast to our national ideals and aims." Of this fact, however, the Globe may be said to have had no official cognizance. For it did not publish Mr. Baker's statement. Nor did a majority of the New York newspapers publish it. Mr. Baker's statement may have been given out at an hour which made it "unavailable copy" for either the morning or evening papers. But it was a statement so welcome to all liberals that it would have been "news" at any time. Nevertheless it was generally ignored by the metropolitan press which, perhaps as much as any section of the press, had been unable to accept the idea of a "news censorship."

In what manner the newspapers outside of New York City treated the Bigelow case we cannot say. The Public Library in New York receives too few of them to make a general conclusion possible. Certainly the stand taken in a number of cases is encouraging. In Mr. Bigelow's own city the Enquirer denounced those who, professing loyalty to democracy, "belie and shame the cause they so clamorously espouse." The Chicago Herald pointed out that "practices hurtful to the common interests are not properly combatted by men who deliberately put themselves beyond the pale of the law." And the Springfield Republican, as might have been expected, declared that "Brutal ruffianism has no more to commend it when it professes sentiments of loyal patriotism. . . . Kentucky has furnished another illustration of the sad fact that America is not yet a completely safe place to live in."

But such criticism, it must be concluded from a study of those out-of-town newspapers which are available, does not define the majority position of the press. The bulk of the newspapers on file in the Public Library seem to have passed over the Bigelow case as one not safe to handle without the risk of misinterpretation. This silence about an affair repugnant to American tradition and to the purposes defined for our present belligerency, is in itself an indication of the need which the press has for official assurance that the national spirit is not so near disintegration that plain criticism is to be feared. And there is, unfortunately, better evidence that such assurance is needed than is given by silence. The Boston Transcript, while it considers the action of those who whipped Bigelow "highly reprehensible," declares that "under the circumstances it is impossible not to note that he really got off unexpectedly well with only forty welts on his bare back." That is a discouraging conclusion, but it comes at the end of a serious discussion of Bigelow's alleged offenses. It is less discouraging, therefore, than the attitude of those newspapers which seemed to see in the incident only an opportunity for conventional humor. The single editorial comment which the St. Louis Globe-Democrat, for instance, has made in the issues which have come to the New York Public Library in the week since Bigelow was whipped, has been to suggest that "It would be interesting to know whether Herbert S. Bigelow practised his doctrine of non-resistance while in the hands of a mob or whether he bit and scratched and kicked like anybody else." The willingness to let the Bigelow case drop with a comment of this sort assumes on the part of the local public an attitude of callous and amused indifference which is distant from the principles of right and fair play we profess to be fighting for. "An Ohio socialist-pacifist spouter," said the Detroit Free Press, "has been horsewhipped. So far as we have heard the victim is the only one complaining."

It is probably true that the men who whipped Bigelow could not have been restrained by any sort of good example. But it is also probably true that they believed themselves to be acting imitatively; to be inventing no new cure for "pacifism," but applying a cure which, as they looked at it, had already been adopted by the government itself. The policy of meeting propaganda, not with counter-propaganda, but with suppression, may be safe enough in the hands of responsible authorities. Graded down to a different scale it may be considered precedent for such punishment as was meted out to Bigelow. As a whole, the press does not seem in this instance to have drawn the line between suppression of sedition and suppression of thought.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It becomes doubly important, therefore, that the line be drawn by the administration itself, so clearly and so often that force used as a cure for political unorthodoxy will seem as ineffectual as force used as a means of conversion to any nation's culture.

A Railroad Policy

ONCE more the railway rate question presses itself upon the public attention, to remind us that we have as yet no definite railway policy. Whether rates as they stand are adequate or not can be satisfactorily determined only with reference to such a policy. Are the railways to remain private enterprises for so long a period that any other system need not enter into our calculations? Then they ought to receive generous advances, to attract capital in competition with other private enterprises and to build up capital besides through reinvestment of surplus earnings. Are the railways to be nationalized in the near future? Then we must be careful to see that rates are not fixed at a level to inflate the capital values that the nation will have to pay for in the end.

In default of a definite policy we are forced to an opportunist's attitude on the immediate question of rate advances. We must assume that the railways are entitled to approximately the level of net earnings that they enjoyed through a period before the war sufficiently long to even out the influence of depression or prosperity. Naturally, due allowance would have to be made for increased investments in the period taken as a standard. We should probably find that while this basis would not validate the claim of the railways to earnings equal to those of 1916—a record year—it would validate their claim to a slight advance now, for the eastern roads only, and a larger advance next year. Labor and every material item of supplies and equipment have risen, and will continue to rise. The railways are moving more passengers and freight than ever before; they are managed with greater efficiency and economy than ever before. Yet the net earnings of the eastern roads are declining. The returns for 1917 are far below those for 1916, and while this is not a sufficient ground for advancing rates, since 1916 was a record year, it is symptomatic of an adversity that will deepen if there is no chance of relief.

Declining earnings are not the whole of the present affliction of the railways. Railway securities have greatly depreciated. This is due in some measure to the present and prospective decline in net earnings. But if there had been a governmental guaranty that whatever happened net earnings would be maintained, interest would be paid on bonds and the usual dividends on stock, the depreciation would still have occurred. The outbreak of war in Europe not only closed a market for railway securities of increasing power of absorption, but it sent home an enormous volume of securities to compete in our own investment market with new issues. And since the entry of the United States into the war, under conditions requiring the raising of a succession of loans certain to sweep the capital market bare, railway securities along with all other corporation securities not buoyed up by war profits, have naturally been still more seriously depressed. This condition bears heavily upon those roads that have obligations falling due which they had planned to extinguish through new loans. They can not borrow at reasonable rates so long as their existing stocks and bonds are depreciated. But they surely can not expect that the government will grant advances in rates sufficient to raise the whole mass of railway securities to the peace time level. They may fairly claim a peace time level of earnings. If this does not make them whole, it is the fortune of war, to be somehow endured. The railways are not alone in having their calculations upset by the war.

But would not generous advances permit the railways to dispense with the financial markets, where their offerings of securities are in disesteem? Would not such advances enable some of them to reduce materially the sums needed for taking up maturing loans, and all of them to make improvements out of surplus? There are very few railway spokesmen who do not urge that rates should yield a comfortable surplus for extensions and improvements, at any rate during the war, when an improved transportation service is most urgently needed. This, as we have already indicated, might be expedient if the railways are to remain private enterprises indefinitely. If they are to be nationalized, such extensions and improvements, virtually made at the public expense, would have to be paid for along with the equipment provided out of the subscriptions to stocks and bonds by private investors. And this is a situation that we are unwilling to contemplate.

The railways will have to remain in private hands for a period of time that has no doubt been lengthened by the engagement of public credit to war needs. But government ownership, we believe, is coming, and the policy of the government ought to be shaped with this in view. If we were to proceed immediately to nationalization we should have to compensate the holders of railway property in the measure of their true interest. This does not mean on a basis of physical valuation, inevitably misleading in the case of any going concern. Nor does it mean on a basis of securities outstanding.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The par values of railway stocks have never had more than a paper meaning. What we should have to pay the railway property owners would be the capital value of the earnings they have had reason to expect under private management. We should not take advantage of the fact that all capital values are depressed in time of war or crisis. Neither should we be so foolish as to allow an inflation of the earnings, the rights to which we should have later to extinguish. A fair capitalization of average earnings through a period long enough to fix the normal is what we should aim at. Thus the private owners would receive due compensation for their property and no more. And while they continued to operate it for our convenience until we were prepared to take it over, they ought to receive such earnings as would maintain the property unimpaired. Nothing more.

But in the interval we must have railway progress, and what incentive is offered to private enterprise if nothing more than normal earnings are to be had? The normal earnings we contemplate are those of the railway system as a whole. Let the level of rates be such that aggregate net earnings of all the railways remain practically stationary, except for increases justified by the investment of additional capital drawn in through the financial markets, or through investment of funds that might properly be paid out in dividends, but not by investment of capital derived from surplus earnings above a reasonable return on true capital. Nothing would prevent the better managed roads from drawing to themselves a larger share of the aggregate net earnings permitted, and thus increasing their share in the ultimate compensation to which railway property owners would be entitled upon nationalization. Nothing would prevent the railways earning a surplus from reinvesting it in betterments. Such betterments would, it is true, help to swell aggregate net earnings and thus tend toward a revision downward of rates. But such a rate reduction would fall upon all the roads, the stagnant as well as the progressive. The relative advantage of the latter would remain, and the absolute advantage would not be seriously diminished by a reduction in rates spread over the whole system.

It may be said that such a policy would lead the railways to dissipate surplus earnings in dividends, instead of applying them to betterments. Any such tendency could be remedied by governmental limitation of dividends. Surpluses would then have to go back into the roads. They would increase the certainty of dividends on the stocks of the best managed roads, and so would raise their values. And, incidentally, with dividends carefully limited and the principle established that in the interval before nationalization the aggregate railway interest to be extinguished shall be neither diminished nor aggrandized, we should not need to concern ourselves seriously with the question whether rates are too high or not. Suppose they were fixed at too high a level; the resulting surplus earnings would necessarily go into improvements of which the public would enjoy the benefit without corresponding addition to its aggregate transportation charges and without increase in the final costs of nationalization.

Such a policy as we have outlined would naturally be abhorrent to those who refuse to accept the ultimate necessity of government ownership and by those who mean by every device to delay the coming of public ownership and to aggravate in the greatest possible degree the costs that the public will have to meet in effecting the change from private ownership. It would also be abhorrent to those who regard railway capital as it now stands as a tissue of iniquity, to be wiped out in large part when the national desire to control the most vital national economic agency becomes irresistible. For our part we have no special quarrel with the railways as such. We see no reason for believing that railway values as they are now constituted are less representative of service and sacrifice than other property values. The railway owners are temporarily holding property that is destined to become public property. For every dollar's worth of capital value of which they are now possessed, and for every dollar of their own money that they invest in the future we wish to see them fairly compensated in present earnings and future payment. Provided, of course, that they manage their properties well. Anything more than this the railway property owners can not obtain without injustice to the public.

The New
REPUBLIC
A Journal of Opinion

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1917, IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA BY THE REPUBLIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., 421 WEST TWENTY-FIRST STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y. HERBERT CROLY, PRESIDENT, ROBERT HALLOWELL, TREASURER.

EDITORS
HERBERT CROLY — FRANCIS HACKETT
PHILIP LITTELL — ALVIN JOHNSON
GEORGE SOULE—Assistant Editor
CHARLES MERZ, Washington Representative

YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION FIFTY-TWO ISSUES, FOUR DOLLARS IN ADVANCE. SINGLE COPIES TEN CENTS. CANADIAN SUBSCRIPTION FOUR DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS PER YEAR IN ADVANCE. FOREIGN SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR COUNTRIES IN THE POSTAL UNION, FIVE DOLLARS PER YEAR IN ADVANCE: REMITTANCE TO BE MADE BY INTERNATIONAL POSTAL MONEY ORDER.

ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MATTER, NOVEMBER 6, 1914, AT THE POST OFFICE AT NEW YORK, N. Y., UNDER THE ACT OF MARCH 3, 1879.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The One Thing Needful

II

SOME people say that the President is too much of an autocrat. I say that he is not enough of an autocrat. True, nothing of importance gets decided till it gets to the White House. True, many things of no importance, trifles, do not get decided till they get to the White House. But that is a poor way of being an autocrat. It is an Oriental way, an archaic and patriarchal way. You sit under a tree, in majesty, in solitude; and your tribesmen quarrel in the distance; and then, after a while, after a long while, two or three of them, who have been unable to resolve their dispute, bring themselves into your presence, respectfully, with battered heads; and you decide, you decree. It is a poor way; because it means that the will of the autocrat is perpetually tardy and, therefore, in war for victory, perpetually feeble. What we need is that the will of Woodrow Wilson shall be instant.

Who can say that his will has been instant in putting our merchant marine to work on the war? Just last month, when France and Italy were almost on their knees to us for ships, the Marine News was making such announcements as that "The North America Steamship Corporation has *inaugurated* a freight and passenger service between New Orleans (Louisiana) and Tampico and Vera Cruz (Mexico) with the steamer Yarmouth. This corporation expects to place four or five other boats in the New Orleans and Gulf trade within the next few months." And that "the next sailing from San Francisco of the *new* East India service of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company will be by the steamer Colusa of 16,000 tons. The ports of call include Manila, Singapore, Calcutta and Colombo. The steamer Santa Cruz of 15,000 tons follows on November 17." And that "the South America-Pacific Line *has been established* by interests in San Francisco between San Francisco and Guayaquil, Ecuador, with the steamers Governor Forbes, Baja, California, Sinaloa, Regulus and Romulus."

Was it the policy of the United States that we should enter into new shipping enterprises to Latin America and to the remote Orient during the war? Was it? Who knew? Certain prominent persons at Washington were openly jubilant about our trade with Latin America, its prospects, its brilliant immediate prospects. What made such prospects thinkable? What but new sailings? It was announced, for instance, that W. R. Grace and Company would *establish* a semi-monthly service between New York and Valparaiso and that they would use, for that purpose, five of the 5,500-ton ships under construction for them in American shipyards. But what of the ships under construction in American shipyards for the British and for the French? Them we commandeered, for war purposes, to put into war-waters. We would not even say whether or not we would give them back to their British and to their French owners, when the war was over. We might give them back. We might keep them. They were useful things. And in the meantime we were assigning many of our own ships, and many neutral ships, in whole or in part, to a continued private trade and even, in certain instances, to an increased private trade in non-war commodities on non-war routes, for ourselves.

In the matter of neutral ships, was it the policy of the United States, was it the will of Woodrow Wilson, that such ships should be diverted from war-waters to peace-waters? Many neutral ships, especially Norwegians, are under such obligations to the British for coal and for other privileges that they can be, and are, compelled by the Inter-Allied Chartering Committee at London to do war-water voyages. They then do those voyages, in almost all cases, for either the French or the Italians. Seldom does the Inter-Allied Chartering Committee assign a neutral ship to the British. The needs of the French and of the Italians are dominant, in neutral controlled tonnage. They are more than dominant. They are virtually exclusive. They are exclusive, that is, for the British. They do not seem to be exclusive for us. We have abstained from membership in the Inter-Allied Chartering Committee. We have abstained from all effective association of any kind with the Inter-Allied Chartering Committee. We have remained unentangled and uninformed. And we have permitted our own citizens to descend upon neutral ships, especially Norwegians, in American ports, and to set about chartering them for utterly non-war voyages on utterly non-war routes when those same ships, left to themselves, would remain docilely within the economic net of the Inter-Allied Chartering Committee and would without question go and do their share of the carrying of war-goods to war-ports in France and Italy. Was this a part of our shipping policy? If so, who made it?

The fact is that nobody made it. And it is for such reasons that we have imagined a "Grand Priority Board" for shipping, to do what Mr. Hurley is void of all proper authority to do—determine the distribution of ships between American

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

military claims and Allied military claims and American civilian claims and Allied civilian claims commandingly, coercively, and therefore promptly.

What would the Board find? It would find that a slash, a terrific slash, would have to be made in some of those claims, or in all of them, frankly, and at once. We cannot credit ourselves, even in our most optimistic moments, with as much as 4,000,000 tons of ocean-going shipping. Call it 4,000,000. Five hundred thousand of it, no matter how much we may call it " ocean-going," will never be accepted for war-zone work. That brings us down to 3,500,000. Between now and next spring we may build 1,000,000 new tons. Let us average that 1,000,000 over the days between now and next spring, and let us assume that by the middle of January we shall have 500,000 of it. That brings us back up again to 4,000,000. But just about 1,000,000 of that 4,000,000 is oil-boats, tankers. We can rent a lot of tankers to the British for their navy. And we can rent some of them to other Allies for useful purposes. But they are specialized ships, incurably specialized. They cannot be counted into any general plan. Subtracting them, we have 3,000,000 tons. Against that 3,000,000 tons, what are the claims? Our army and our navy, if they are allowed to have their full way, will soon want at least 1,500,000 tons of it. The French and the Italians and the Russians, examined and cross-examined, will need at least another 1,500,000 tons of it, and they will then still suffer. Total available tonnage: 3,000,000. Total of needed tonnage, for the war itself, on war-routes, 3,000,000. Where are our imports? Where, first, are our imports from non-war places for war-winning purposes? Nitrates for explosives for soldiers? Chrome for steel for soldiers? Wool for clothes for soldiers? Sugar for rations for soldiers? And where, second, are our imports from non-war places for civilian purposes? Where, for instance, is civilian coffee? And where, finally, is our coastwise trade? Where are the successors to the ships that Mr. Hoover laid hands on recently for carrying 100,000,000 pounds of sugar, coastwise, from Louisiana to New York and to other northeastern ports? Will the 500,000 tons which we have rejected from the war-zone suffice for these additional needs? Will our sailing-ships? They will not. These additional needs, or else the needs of our army and our navy, or else the needs of the French and of the Italians and of the Russians, must be slashed, must be slashed with a broad-axe.

Let us suppose that our " Grand Priority Board " starts out to do it. The first step it takes is to present its recommendations, together with its data, on which its recommendations are based, to the President. His approval is manifestly necessary. The Board may be unanimous in its recommendations. It may not be unanimous. That would make no difference. It would present a report, jointly, as a Board, as an impartial and supreme Board, with all rival claims analyzed and with various courses, or one course, of action suggested. The President would select, modify, approve. The gain, the inestimable gain, would be this: the will of the President would be informed by a group of men concertedly responsible for formulating impartial and supreme policies and concertedly responsible thereafter for executing them.

But have we not a Council of National Defense? We have. That is, we have a thing called a Council of National Defense. But this thing has no concerted responsibility whatsoever. It continues, it defiantly continues, to be unable to bind even its own six members, as heads of cabinet departments, to any one course of action. It creates a War Industries Board and a Purchasing Commission within the Board; and the Purchasing Commission turns out to have one sort of power in relation to one cabinet department and another sort of power in relation to another cabinet department, and it turns out even to have different sorts of power in relation to different purchasing sections within the same cabinet department; and a manufacturer came to Washington the other day and sold the same commodity to four different purchasing sections at four different prices. As a commanding and coercing body for men the Council is much inferior to the General Federation of Women's Clubs for women. Whatever it has done of value has been done, in fact, for the most part, by the camel-like quality of certain of its sub-committees of business men who have thrust their necks under the tent-flaps and pushed. The Council itself is not a Council. It is an unresolved hexagon.

Moreover, it has nothing to do with shipping, except that it is ordered, by the statute which established it, to advise the President " as to the development of sea-going transportation." It may advise him. It is not empowered to execute its own advice when he has adopted it. He adopted the War Industries Board idea, at the time a good idea, I still believe. And then Mr. Baker did what seemed right in his own eyes about it in the War Department, and so did Mr. Daniels in the Navy Department, and it is therefore clear that even if Mr. Hurley were a member of the Council of National Defense—which he is not—the Council could not and would not control him.

At one time the Council did indeed adventure itself into shipping by appointing a " Shipping Committee," of shipping men. But this committee just naturally floated away from the neighborhood of the Council and drifted into the neighborhood of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Shipping Board; and its chairman, Mr. Munson, now represents the Shipping Board on the War Trade Board.

The national value of the Council today might be summed up thus:

Shipping is at present the most important part of the war for us. The Council, partly because of its statute and partly because of its temper, has no control of shipping.

Shipbuilders have come to Washington and, in great perplexity, have demanded to know: Should they give priority to the ships they were building for the navy or to the ships they were building for the Emergency Fleet Corporation? The navy wanted speed. The Emergency Fleet Corporation wanted speed. What power does the Council of National Defense possess, what power has it tried to get, to decide that certain ships shall precede other ships into the water and then *to enforce its decision?* None.

A body which cannot jointly and bindingly execute a high policy, on all parties concerned, will never even formulate a high policy. That is why the formulation of every high policy falls crushingly, time after time, on the President. That is why we assume that our "Grand Priority Board" will have the power to execute. That is why we assume that it will have the power to bind Mr. Baker and to bind Mr. Daniels and to bind everybody else. Otherwise it will not think. If it cannot act, it will not think.

Therefore, when our "Grand Priority Board" has made its recommendations to the President, and when the President has done his selecting and his modifying and his approving, we imagine the Board going on, immediately, to action. It has already strengthened the President's autocracy, his necessary administrative autocracy, by serving him as a machine, as a supreme and impartial machine, super-departmental, for the informing of his will. It now strengthens his autocracy again by proceeding to execute his will, his informed and declared will, on all departments comprehensively and continuously. Thereupon his autocracy becomes effective because it becomes effectively possible. It gets confined to the hours of decision. It escapes the days of information undigested and of execution unharmonized. In shipping, in the war. *And in virtually everything else of high importance in the war.*

For, consider. As soon as the "General Priority Board" begins to enforce a shipping policy, it begins to tell the War Department how many men can go to France and therefore how many men should be trained just now, and it begins to tell the Navy Department how many destroyers can be built and therefore how many new bluejackets should be enlisted just now, and it begins to tell the War Industries Board how much steel can be transported to Europe for the Allies and therefore how much steel should be manufactured for the Allies in America just now, and it begins to tell our whole civilian population how much food it is likely to get from abroad and therefore what shifts of work or of appetite it must adopt for increased production at home or for increased abstinence, and it begins to tell something of some sort to almost everybody of every sort, public or private.

What is it, then, this Board? We have seen that it is greatly desirable, that it is even, for harmony and for rapidity, unavoidable, in the matter of shipping. But it reveals itself, as soon as it acts, to be much more, infinitely more, than a shipping affair. It reveals itself to be what is revealed finally in every other affair projected to bring harmony and rapidity into any high part of the war. It reveals itself to be the One Thing Needful—the "War Council of the United States."

Why should Mr. Wilson hesitate to create it? It would bring him to his full stature. It would bring the war to its full strength.

WILLIAM HARD.

Mobilizing the Billboards

NOTHING could have been more irrelevant to the man in the street than our first recruiting posters. For the man in the street, whether he signed a recruit's oath, bought a Liberty bond, or subscribed to the Red Cross, saw the shark's-snout of a submarine, Rheims ablaze, leprous shell craters, No Man's Land swallowing its dead. His composite picture of the war, set flaming and thundering by newspaper headlines, had become as definitely a drama of good and evil as any medieval vision of the plains of purgatory and the tiers of hell. What he found on the billboards, as a rule, was nothing more than the star-spangled chorus of a roof garden.

Columbia and Uncle Sam paraded in new bunting. Soldiers in new uniforms stood at attention while the flag was waved and the patriotic finale was sung. Such sailors as appeared were the same blond youths who had demonstrated the neat fit of Arrow brand collars in the street cars. Having suffered a sea change they appeared bare-necked in white sailor blouses. Whatever tag these posters bore, they conveyed nothing but the puerile assurance that it is splendid to wear a uniform. Uncle Sam occasionally lost his temper, and pointed an angry finger. At times Columbia slept, pillowed in a wicker chair presumably on a hotel veranda. The poster read, "America, wake up!" And we

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

were asked to assume that Columbia, once awakened, would suddenly become the goddess of national energy.

So complete a failure to touch popular imagination is made possible because publicity committees, national or local, have failed to realize the qualities essential to posters if they are to become effective substitutes for heralds' banners or town-criers' bells. A poster is an advertisement made beautiful in order to be more convincing, a mural decoration that successfully harangues the crowd. Its beauty is a sudden and unexpected simplicity, violent juxtaposition of silhouettes, vivid patterns of light and shade that hold the eye spellbound at fifty feet, sonorous clashes of color that sound above all the other noises of the street with the insistence of trumpets or chimes. A poster's meaning should be latent in every image it uses so that, at its first words, they become militant symbols. And for that reason a poster designer's understanding of human psychology must equal his skill as a designer, for his problem is always two-fold: to find the basic appeal of whatever cause he is advocating, and, once that is determined, to dramatize it widely against an appropriate background. Without graphic gifts he will produce nothing more potent than an ugly advertisement. Without a genuine sense of what advertising means he will create decorations, beautiful but irrelevant.

The only artists in America equipped to produce the posters we need are a group of younger American designers who for the past three or four years have succeeded in beautifying some of our advertisements. Mr. Treidler and Mr. Britton are two of this group, and their posters were the first effective aid the nation's billboard campaign has had. Analyze Mr. Treidler's poster for the Liberty Loan. Its color scheme, Liberty, violently sketched in black and gold against a space of intensely blue sky, carried like a surging note from any window as far as the top of any passing bus. Instantly legible were the words, " Liberty Loan " and a huge question mark poised in the sky. Mr. Treidler challenged response by allowing a symbol of doubt to dominate his whole design. At first glance the poster made plain that the success of the Liberty Loan was at stake. The words " Have you bought your bond? " explained the issue. With nothing more said, the case for the loan was unequivocally directed at every passer-by, staged spaciously and with a touch of beauty. Again in Mr. Britton's poster for Hoover's campaign the case for food conservation is reduced to a vital formula:

" To Farm is as Necessary as to Arm.
Produce Food, Conserve Food, Dry and Can Food."

Above these words two farm horses and a farmer hauling a plow over a hilltop loom large against the sky, a line of brightly checkered fields rimming the horizon. Now, a hilltop lends intangible glamor to whatever treads it, man or beast. For the sight of a hilltop stirs half realized emotions of hope, effort and success; it is the place where the climb ends, winds always blow and we gain a glimpse of new horizons. Though we cross a hill to gather blackberries, seen at a distance on its crest, we seem bound on a momentous journey. The device of putting saints and heroes on hills, and then looking at the horizon from between their legs, thereby giving them stature and suggesting the realms they dominated and the scope of their adventures, was known to Perugino and Veronese. Mr. Britton has used it just as effectively. Putting his farmer on a hill has not only placed him where he is most conspicuous, but has also made him more of a hero and less of a hayseed.

Every subsequent poster issued by the Food Commission has been as boldly designed, and as eloquent. The essentially technical problem of food values has been analyzed without a mention of proteids and carbohydrates, and then summarized in a series of illustrated commandments, so succinct and so legible that patriotic householders can find their primer at any street corner. Witness the window placard which shows helmeted soldiers in a snow-bound trench, and bears the words:

" Fats are Fuel for Fighters;
Boil, Bake and Broil more—Fry less ";

or a market basket, large in the foreground against a distant silhouette of passing troops—" Food is Ammunition, don't waste it "; or, finally, Britton's second poster, a bright still-life of fish, fruits and vegetables, heading two lists of food, proscribed and commended, well grouped under two captions, " Eat more," " Eat less." The Food Commission, in pleading the cause of economy, have used all the economy of æsthetic design, literally boiled down their injunctions, instead of leaving them to sizzle in the unnecessary grease of rhetoric and argument. Such metaphors as " fats are fuel " and " food is ammunition " are a rudimentary sort of poetry which help one's mind to think, by prompting it to visualize. And Britton's fruits and fish are so succulently colored that they might conceivably whet even a beef eater's appetite for mackerel and tomatoes.

A dozen effective ways have been found of analyzing our appetite and explaining to us how we may drill our stomachs so as to help the army. But the Treasury has not found one which analyzes our habits of saving and spending as they affect

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the problem of the best way to pay for the war. Small wonder that an army of volunteer salesmen is needed to float every successive issue of Liberty bonds. The problem of national financing could be reduced to such fundamental alternatives as "Broil more—Fry less." But the country is not helped to discover them by being shown views of the Treasury building, bad portraits of the President, facsimiles of bronze plaques, views of the Liberty statue in a dim middle distance, or a soldier and a sailor mutually brandishing a white something, which on inspection at close range proves to be a Liberty bond and not a pouch of popular tobacco.

The utter ineffectiveness of Liberty Loan posters is proved once again in a hoarding opposite the Grand Central Terminal where they are pasted beside the posters of the Fusion campaign. Mitchel in Plattsburg khaki is seen bayoneting a prowling tiger. A yellow tiger casts on a blue wall the black shadow of Murphy. Murphy and Hearst unmistakably caricatured dandle a monkey-on-a-stick, against a vista of City Hall. One does not have to read its label to know that the jumping-jack is Hylan. By purely graphic means, candidates become the villains and the heroes of a living legend which everyone must either hiss or applaud, and one party emphasizes its sense of the fundamental issues more vividly than it could with a hundred stump speakers. But the Liberty Loan posters are crowded with the remote rhetoric of public orations bracketed in quotation marks.

Our problem at present is how to insure enough posters such as the Food Commission's or Mayor Mitchel's and produce them continuously. The result might be achieved by organizing our ablest poster designers into directing committees one for every city. In New York we have Britton, Treidler, Fancher, Hartman, Walts and as many others who have demonstrated their ability. In Boston and Chicago there is a nucleus for similar groups, and as far west as Los Angeles there is Trenso, who has produced a resplendent series of designs for the Santa Fé Railroad. Every committee would produce its own posters, authorize printing, and coöperate in turn with whatever department needed to appeal to the country for support. The prime purpose of such preliminary conferences would be to determine the basis on which this appeal would be made. The aviation service might report, in effect, "Find some way of picturing the fact that without one thousand aviators the army is blind. The war will be won in the air." Or a food committee finding a glut of garden truck going to waste could issue specific appeals to can tomatoes and carrots without delay. Vegetables and aeroplanes pictured in a dozen different sets of posters would then appear simultaneously in a thousand streets, carrying their message through every city and ultimately every village.

Concerted poster campaigns of this sort would eventually become poster "drives" analogous to military drives, concentrating every weapon of advertisement available against local ignorance and popular apathy to each crisis as it occurred. The expedient, in an age of newspapers, may seem primitive. But the possibility of a community seeing its problems tangibly presented in the streets, if necessary, is a more adequate way of promptly meeting an emergency than seeing each issue darkly through those grimy panes of antique economic theory which certain newspapers occasionally set into their editorial columns.

We may be reluctant to advertise war measures systematically, remembering "the deceptive clamor on the billboards which habitually disfigures the scenery, covers fences, plasters the city, blinks and winks through the night." But the fact remains that a nation is forced to advertise its needs in order to win recruits, just as a manufacturer is forced to advertise his promises in order to gain purchasers. What we advertise in time of peace are the trivial alternatives of using one brand of soup, tooth paste or hosiery rather than another. When the choice is not irrevocable, catch-words, bluff and buncombe, spectacular display of letters nine feet high or a thousand lamps flashing in unison may entice a buyer. But in advertising the fundamental alternatives of famine or plenty, life or death, we are forced to use the more inevitable eloquence of poetry and imagination by which any creed is communicated to a people. In pretending that the war is not being advertised, we shall merely continue to advertise it unintelligently, with the random jingoism and the spontaneous puerility of our first advertisements for recruits. But the billboards can be successfully mobilized, if our administrators possess sufficient imagination to make their demands eloquent, and will deliberately enlist designers with enough imagination to make these demands tangible, capable of being experienced by the public as a whole.

Although our poster designers fail to create new symbols they may nevertheless reanimate old ones, blazon cities with insistent heraldry, devise vivid legends for our hopes, create visions which will make the elation of volunteering, subscribing or dieting as emphatic as the elation of gaining a fine view from the crest of a hill. Such posters are needed to voice their summons in every other street —a summons that can sound as appropriately from walls and fences as from the throats of trumpets or the bellies of drums.

LEE SIMONSON.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Political Revolt in the Northwest

II—The Farmer as Legislator

THE clearest test to which the National Nonpartisan League has been put is its manipulation of the North Dakota legislature. The machinery of that state was captured by the League in the last election. It has subsequently had one legislative session in which to demonstrate what it could do in the way of constructing a new order. Accordingly a survey of the record of the North Dakota legislature is the best way of measuring the purposes and integrity of the organization to which the farmers of a dozen western states are being won.

It must be noted, however, that there were two substantial obstacles in the League's path. For one thing, while it succeeded in electing four out of five members in the lower house, the League had no control over the Senate. In that body half of the membership held over from a previous election, and the opposition party retained a margin of eight votes. There was a second handicap for the League in the inexperience of its own delegates, who had been so carefully selected as being truly representative of the soil that they also represented no familiarity with the ways of drawing bills, or even of voting on them. They were men honestly in sympathy with the purposes of the League; but they were, in the estimation of their leaders, ever liable to pass some opposition measure in a moment of misunderstanding. In fact, as the opposition points out, only a scheme based upon a fortunate disparity saved many of the measures most destructive to the League's program from being passed. It was a scheme to which it is not easy to give credence without having talked with the men who used it. When the black-haired reading-clerk of the House read a bill, the League delegates voted Yes; when a bill was reported by his colleague, whose hair was red, the farmers voted No with a great single-mindedness.

This uncertain condition was, of course, not permitted to last. The leaders of the League at once took pains to instruct their legislators in the mechanics as well as the purposes of legislation. A hotel in Bismarck was rented. The Nonpartisan delegates had it to themselves, sheltered by a watchful guardianship from the designs of opposition lobbyists. In these quarters a nightly caucus was held, in which bills were discussed, amended from the floor, and the whole process of legislation gone through with, except the actual formal proceedings, which had to wait until the next day. In this manner, using the star-chamber caucus which—when used by the opposition—had seemed so subversive of democracy, the Nonpartisan legislators set about redeeming the program upon which their campaign had been made. It was a formidable program—promising state elevators, mills and hail insurance, state regulation of grading standards, a state rural credits system, and exemption of farm improvements from taxation. It promised, in a word, the use of the state as distributor and promoter.

The chief instrument with which the Nonpartisan delegates planned to make good on their election pledges was House bill 44. There would be other legislation. But House bill 44 was to be the farmers' Bill of Rights. Its preamble declared that the existing constitution of the state made anything like justice to the producer impossible. It proposed, therefore, that a special election be held to give the voters an opportunity to pass upon a modernized code of government. The new constitution would open a natural market-way to the producer: it would give the state the right to enter any manufacturing or industrial field, and the power to increase its debts by $500,000. The margin thus provided would afford enough leeway for a terminal elevator and a flour mill to be built by bond issues. That was the immediate purpose in changing the old constitution. But while the Nonpartisan legislators were about it, they proposed to make the new code thoroughly modern. Their plan provided for the short ballot and the recall of public officials, extended the term of elective offices from two to four years, and took away from the courts the right to declare unconstitutional any law adopted by a vote of the people.

Irregular as the opposition party held these latter proposals to be, it was the idea of projecting the state into business, using bond issues to finance state enterprises, which seemed to it an actual approach to general anarchy. Such an idea it termed the work of fanatics. The state had fallen into the hands of profligates; inevitably its treasured school funds would go into impractical schemes, and the government be plunged into the deepest realms of bankruptcy. The proposed constitution went through the lower house, of course, with no formality at all; and the Nonpartisan leaders used every minority weapon to edge it through in the Senate. If the opposition would not listen to the voice of the people, perhaps it would listen to warnings of the dire fate that would meet Senate bills when they reached the lower house. All attempts, however, at forcibly converting the Senate

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

failed. After a struggle lasting through a good part of the session the hold-over senators voted down the new constitution. The farmer legislators and their constituents were indignant. The League leaders assailed Big Business. The League's president declared that the suffering of the poor, "the weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth in the city of New York, can be traced directly to the state of North Dakota, and to those twenty-eight hold-over senators and their kind, who are responsible for their misery." Nevertheless, it is hard to believe that the killing of the new constitution was not a piece of luck for the League. For had it been passed the League members might have expected the immediate arrival of the farmers' millennium. The failure of the constitution gave the Nonpartisan leaders a breathing space in which to warn their followers that not too complete a change must be expected at once. It also led them to decide to try getting the new constitution adopted by a petition to the people. That is a definite two-year job, and a strong argument for League organizers in asking for a two-year paid-in-advance membership fee of sixteen dollars.

Despite the failure of the measure upon which it had counted most, the Nonpartisan group in the legislature succeeded in putting through certain measures in answer to its campaign pledges. It had promised to put an end to methods of weighing and grading grain which the farmers believed were costing them hundreds of thousands of dollars annually; an act was passed, in both houses, vesting powers of regulation in a new office of State Inspector of Grains, Weights, and Measures. The League had further declared, in the course of its campaign, that it would secure exemption of farm improvements from taxation. It secured partial exemption. A law was enacted which permitted such improvements to be assessed at five per cent of their true worth, while the property of banks, railroad companies and the lesser agents of Big Business was assessed at thirty per cent of its actual value. The passage of this one law was enough to convince many farmers that the League was substantially on the right track.

There were other developments which served to demonstrate to the farmers the superior advantages of political organization. A new coöperative corporation law was enacted. The State Grange, and other purely economic and social alliances, had for years been lobbying for such a law, without success. There was also a law to prevent railways from discriminating, in supplying freight cars, against elevators owned by farmers' coöperative societies. In previous sessions a plea for the passage of this act had gone unanswered; the legislators rested complacent in the assurance that the farmers' vote would invariably be split between the Democratic and Republican parties, over some issue manufactured in Washington or Chicago. But the most interesting side of the Nonpartisan League's first experiment in government is not its effort to keep the farmers united and satisfied, but the seemingly genuine manner in which the League lined up with progressive thinking.

The range of its interest is remarkable. Suffrage was extended to women, so far as the time-honored state constitution would permit. A Public Welfare Commission, modeled on the Washington plan, was created to investigate the economic and social conditions of women and child workers. Evening schools were established for young men and women above school age. The inheritance tax upon large fortunes was raised to fifteen per cent. An act was passed for the consolidation of rural schools, in a state where less than twenty-five per cent of the farm children finished the eighth grade. The compulsory school age was raised to seventeen years—and this in spite of the fact that the farmer, perhaps more than any other workman, is accustomed to expect his older children to drop their schooling and work at his side. It was an achievement to secure the enactment of such laws as these, particularly with an opposition Senate ready to snap up every opportunity to discredit the Nonpartisan legislators. The spectre of the proposed new constitution must have loomed up so threateningly that the Senate was ready, in a spirit of compromise, to accept any measure which did not actually set the state up in the milling business.

The Nonpartisan delegates, however, went too far for even a Senate thus apprehensive to follow them. They were interested not only in turning the machinery of government to new uses, but in overhauling the machinery of government itself. Here they were unsuccessful. One measure they did succeed in putting through—an act which combined a county clerkship with a district clerkship, and did away with a minor elective office ordinarily regarded as a piece of the political pie. But in their more thorough plans the League representatives failed. For they proposed the revolutionary innovation of a "nonpartisan ballot"—which would wipe off party names and permit the voters to choose their officials on issues of local significance. They wanted to go even further: to take state and county offices out of political campaigns by giving the legislature the power to make them appointive. Both of these proposals were defeated by the opposition group in the Senate. But both showed that the League had not set itself up in politics merely to play the game for its small

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

booty; the government machinery must run with as little waste as possible, because, in the not distant future, it was to run for the purpose of serving popular economic ends.

Had the Nonpartisan League's delegates been less busy with genuine issues they might have written upon the statute books the miscellany of minor laws to catch local political support, which are so often the only achievements of a state legislature. There was time in North Dakota for little of this community jobbing, and the first session of the farmers' legislature had as good a record in what it did not do as in what it succeeded in accomplishing. Its session was limited by law to sixty days. A good part of the legislation which it put through was frankly a bid for continued support from the farmers; but it was legislation which marked the introduction of a healthy economic interest into politics. Even at the cost of what is known as class legislation, politics can stand having some of its catchword issues permanently shelved. And though the Nonpartisan legislators were willing enough to indulge the farmer, they showed a broad interest in progressive social legislation and in a reform of the machinery of the state. That interest is an encouraging aspect of the League's present beginnings at organization in a dozen western states.

CHARLES MERZ.

Education for the Future

IN the days of the break-up of pagan faiths in Rome many people tried to escape despair and achieve at least a negative sort of happiness by a detached and cynical contemplation of the world. This intellectual separation from human destinies was followed in the dark ages by the monastic withdrawal from the world which attempted to be both physical and spiritual, an escape from unendurable conditions and a justification. The element common to both these attitudes was a disclaimer of responsibility.

The spirit of our time has of course an opposite character. With the increasing security and comfort of the centuries, the sanguine side of man's nature increasingly asserts itself; he believes that benefits may be had from carefully chosen action, and he also enjoys the action for its own sake; our modern institution of democracy is based upon the theory that the world will grow better because of man's eagerness to make the effort, provided only he have freedom enough to give full sweep to this instinctive desire. In all practical ways we make it an axiom that progress in decency and in the arts of clean and fruitful living is the greatest satisfaction that the mass of men can find.

Notwithstanding the war, perhaps even more because of it, we are likely to see in practice a conscious and systematic extension of the principle that man has objective relations to his fellows and to his environment, that the improvement and more harmonious working of those relations is what we call progress, and that his happiness comes from the observation of those gains and the thought that he has done his share in earning them for mankind. The question then arises by what type of education this generally desired progress may best be promoted.

If the aim of such a type of education is kept in mind, its characteristics will take the shape, and they in turn should suggest alike its material and its method. The first essential will obviously be to stimulate the individual curiosity; then to foster the growing initiative and to give it all possible varieties of experience suited to its strength; finally to develop the consciousness that the future progress towards which these things aim will be reached by social change and not by individual successes however numerous or by private culture.

The expectation of change as a permanent factor in the life of mankind and the preparation for it will have the greatest importance. Change we cannot prevent either in the evolution of the universe, or in the evolution of society, and we should do well if, instead of trying to hold it back altogether, an attitude which keeps us unready for it, we should be training our children to accept it as normal and to contribute towards the right change. The minds that are turning the world over are the minds that are making new combinations out of the refractory material; preference of what was to what is coming represents decay.

Now we do not want decay for our children, yet we have been doing little in their school lives to vitalize their futures by teaching them to look forward. A child trained to consider the material of the past, in literature, history or science as having absolute value for its own sake will not be restlessly and perseveringly trying to reshape the old material for the new needs. The mind which in childhood has been led by the teacher's hand through literature as a historic museum, whose specimens, Milton, Pope, Johnson, Cowper, must be worshipped and may be copied, will find its flower a wilted bloom—in "allusive style"; it will know specimen literature and be able to tag quotations on nature—but it will not often grasp the potency of ideas, or even the beauty of form; its main pleasure in literature will be in recognizing the familiar. The student whose eyes do not leave the books of economics will become a scholar-economist; he will be able to give objectively the Marxian or Spencerian doctrines and arguments,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but he will not see what industry has been doing to society since the day of Mark Hanna, and it is doubtful if he will even understand that Marx and Spencer were flesh and blood men whose respective bodies of thought were shaped by environment, constitutional physiology and the unconscious pressure of events. We "educate" the boy by imposing upon him a conventional taste instead of by helping to feed and train his own power.

The Greeks are offered to us as an argument for a backward-looking culture, but they prove the opposite of the "classical." A great curiosity about the world, man's place in it and how he could shape it to his purposes, this was the vitalizing force of Greek life, and this with the aid of happy conditions made the Greek phenomenon. This activity of the senses and brain, this vitalizing of the whole organism of the individual and of the whole organism of the "city," was due to their curiosity and astonishment at the newness and wonder of the world.

If we wish to achieve our intellectual freedom we shall have to do it for ourselves as the Greeks did. We cannot achieve *their* freedom; it is past, not to be had again, and contemplation and rapture over it will not give us the spirit of the Greek culture for our own use. The spirit, individual or social, is a living thing, by its name and by its nature, a flame that burns, and it must in degree make the world over for itself or it is not spirit. We ought to want to be as wonderful as the Greeks were, but we cannot copy their way of being wonderful.

This is what Mr. Santayana means when he says:

> The effort to reproduce the peculiarities of antiquity is a proof that we are not its natural heirs, that we do not continue antiquity instinctively. People can mimic only what they have not absorbed. They reconstruct and turn into an archæological masquerade only what strikes them as outlandish. The genuine inheritors of a religion or an art never dream of reviving it; its antique accidents do not interest them, and its eternal substance they possess by nature. . . . In truth classical studies were vital only so long as they were still authoritative morally and set the standard for letters and life. They became otiose and pedantic when they began to serve merely to recover a dead past in its trivial detail, and to make us grow sentimental over its remoteness, its beauty, and its ruins.

The effort in the new training will be towards a realism suitable to the individuality of the child and his mental development. Skill and power in any art, from wrestling to sculpture, come from practice of the art under the eye of the master, and skill for the child in handling all the difficult and complicated phases of life will come from as many first-hand contacts with it as possible; out of experiences will come his experience.

In the later parts of such training will come the emphasis upon the evolution of society, the certainty and the slowness of social change. A human society is a living organism; its future depends upon the character of the units, the children, it is continuously incorporating in itself; their social attitude depends largely on the nature of their education; for these reasons society is vitally concerned in the nature of that education and may dictate what it shall be; these are commonplaces. But they lead inevitably to what are not yet commonplaces, viz.: that our children will live in a collective future which will be different from our collective present; that we can do something towards making that collective future by keeping our eyes on it and can do much to prepare the future citizens for their tomorrow; and that such treatment is much kinder towards them as individuals than the effort to make "cultivated men and women" out of them by making their little minds repositories of the selected best things of the past.

At any rate society needs the new method for its own sake, and will therefore have it. Librarians are needed, but only a few, while good citizens must be many. It was not accidental that Mazzini's literary admiration was all for the romanticists of his time. "These literary disputes," he urged, "are bound up with all that is important in social and civic life"; "the legislation and literature of a people always advance on parallel lines," and "the progress of intellectual culture stands in intimate relationship with the political life of the country." Shakespeare, Cervantes and Beethoven were the romanticists of their time, and time has made them "classics"; they made art out of life enthusiastically at first hand, while the second and third-hand artists whose own art was made out of traditions were charging them with all the possible heterodoxies.

The progress of the past helps us with suggestions, but it is valueless unless we learn by trying how to make our own progress. It is important to know something about those vague shapes, the Gracchi, but it is more important to get a perception at first hand of the yeast that is working in our own time, to understand something of Keir Hardie and Kerensky and Jaurès. Truly, the Gracchi were spiritual, but not because they spoke Latin or were remote in time; they were bold, distrusted by the conservatives; they did not lead greedy, self-regarding lives. The French Revolution was also a spiritual event, and so is the Russian Revolution, and so is each event that takes men out of a stereotyped and barren acceptance of tradition into a confused, struggling and more hopeful future.

CHARLES P. HOWLAND.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A COMMUNICATION

Undemocratic Magyars

SIR: In your issue of September 22nd appears an article by Eugene S. Bagger, entitled The Hungarian Upheaval, whose argument and conclusions I cannot permit to pass unchallenged.

According to Mr. Bagger, there exist two quite different Hungaries. One is that of Count Tisza and the "Magyar Junkers," a pro-German and militaristic minority, a minority which has oppressed not only the Jugoslavs, the Rumanians, and the Slovaks, but also the Magyar peasant and workman. The other is the democratic Hungary, consisting of the majority of the "Hungarian" people, desirous of peace, and disposed to undertake great social, political and economic reforms, not only for the population of Magyar race, but also for the subject nationalities and ready even to confer a certain autonomy on the latter. This democratic Hungary, which, Mr. Bagger informs us, has been in opposition to Count Tisza since the beginning of the war, has at last succeeded in overthrowing him and effecting a kind of revolution in the country. It is today in power, and asks only for an acceptable peace, that is to say, one which would guarantee the territorial integrity of the "historic state of Hungary."

Hungary according to the official statistics, which everybody knows are very partial to the Magyars, had in 1910, 20,886,487 inhabitants, of whom 10,050,575 (48.1 per cent) were Magyars and 10,835,912 (51.9 per cent) were non-Magyars (Serbo-Croats, Slovaks, Rumanians and Germans). The Hungarian Parliament consists of 413 deputies, exclusive of the 40 delegates sent to it by the Croatian Sabor, and of these 405 are Magyars and only 8 represent other races. Thus the 9,994,627 Magyars of Hungary proper (without Croatia and Slavonia) are represented by 405 deputies, and 8,320,906 non-Magyars have only 8 deputies. By what system of electoral geometry, administrative pressure and social corruption it was possible to form such a Parliament in this country of "millenary parliamentarism," foreign countries today know well from the works of two authorities in this field, Mr. H. Wickham Steed, for ten years correspondent of the London Times in Austria-Hungary, and at present foreign editor of that journal, and of Dr. R. W. Seton-Watson, lecturer in East European History, King's College, University of London.

Your Magyar contributor does not even attempt to defend the disgraceful treatment which the government of the "Magyar Junkers" has inflicted and still inflicts on the non-Magyar nationalities of his native country. But he promises that the "democratic Hungary," at present in power, will remedy very shortly this state of things, that it will emancipate the 10,000,000 of Jugoslav, Rumanian and Slovak pariahs, and that it is only necessary to "give it the chance" by guaranteeing it the territorial integrity of Hungary, etc.

This "democratic Hungary" is not, however, in power for the first time. Its former period of government not only brought nothing good but proved that its policy is as chauvinistic and pan-Magyar as that of the "Junkers." It was Count Apponyi, one of the "democratic leaders" in the great opposition cabinet in 1906, under the presidency of Dr. Wekerle, who introduced the celebrated educational law, which had for its aim the forcible Magyarization of the children of non-Magyar parents.

And the hatred of the "democratic Hungary" against its Slav and Rumanian fellow-citizens, whom it accuses of being, and treats as, traitors, has only been augmented by the war. Its official party organs and the declarations of responsible Magyars give us clear proof of this. "I desire to work on democratic lines," declared Count Esterhazy, late "liberal" Prime Minister of Hungary, who succeeded the "reactionary" Count Tisza, "but it goes without saying that democracy in Hungary can only be a Magyar democracy." (Az Est, June 10th, 1917.) The present Prime Minister of Hungary, Dr. Alexander Wekerle, whom your contributor calls "one of the shrewdest and most farsighted of Magyar statesmen with an eminently liberal record, who immediately promised to put through the entire program of the radicals," has simply indorsed the profession of faith of his predecessor. As a Budapest dispatch in the papers assures us, he has declared that he "advocates the same principles regarding the suffrage as did his immediate predecessor."

Writing in the Magyarorszag (June 12th, 1917), Professor Istvan Apathy, a prominent member of the Independence party, expresses the following view on electoral reform: "We desire the supremacy of the Magyars, who have built up the thousand years' edifice of the Magyar State," while a reporter of the Alkotmany, who had undertaken an inquiry among the various politicians on the reform bill, notes as follows the opinion of Count Karolyi himself (June 13th, 1917): "Karolyi holds that the ballot should be secret with certain restrictions, especially in the villages. Karolyi realizes that in non-Magyar communities secret suffrage might become a means of dangerous propaganda, and therefore the ballot can be secret only in communities where the number of non-Magyar voters falls below a given limit." The authenticity of this statement has never been questioned or denied.

Not only has Hungary failed to solve the problem of the non-Magyar nationalities, but she cannot even give true liberty, democratic liberty, to her own Magyar population until her national frontiers are reduced so as to contain only the compact mass of Magyars. An electoral franchise which would place on an equal footing all the inhabitants of Hungary, would send to the Parliament of Budapest a majority of non-Magyars, which would signify the end of the Magyar hegemony in Hungary, a thing which not only "democrats" of the Karolyi type but even the demagogues of the most advanced kind, in search of non-Magyar electors, candidates of the Vazsonyi type, could not permit.

It has been proposed to solve the problem of nationalities in Austria-Hungary through federalization, but this solution is wholly unacceptable to the Magyars. The grounds of their opposition are given at length by Count Andrassy ("the liberal leader noted as a pacifist and a friend of England" as he is styled by Mr. Bagger) in a recent article translated in the Christian Science Monitor (August 23, 1917). "The idea of a federalized monarchy," he said, "would encounter the most energetic opposition, for it is precisely now that Hungarianism has entered the lists in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the full glow of chauvinism and enthusiasm for the Monarchy." Dr. Wekerle has expressed his opinion on this question in the following terms: "I protest with the utmost energy against such tendencies. Austria can only realize her domestic and autonomous reforms by leaving intact the dual form of the Monarchy. This dual form of the State I regard as inviolable." As a matter of fact, there is no Magyar party which would dare to come forward with a federal program.

It is also a fact that of twenty million "Hungarians," ten million ardently desire freedom from the other ten and union with their brothers in race outside of the Hungarian State. It is only by violence that their subjection to the Magyar state can be maintained. Before the war they expressed this desire so openly, especially those who gravitated towards Serbia, in spite of drastic and cruel repression, that Hungarian statesmen were forced to the conclusion that the difficulty could be overcome only through the extinction of the Serbian state and the division of its territory between Hungary and Bulgaria.

The war has not had the success that the Magyars hoped it would have, and today, though the majority continue to demand the annexation of a large part of Serbia, the others (the more moderate party) would content themselves with the "internal conquest" of Hungary, that is to say, the ultimate Magyarization of the subject races of the Hungarian state.

The Hungarian problem (which at bottom is only a part of the entire Austro-Hungarian problem and one which cannot be solved separately) is a problem of international importance which must be solved internationally. For it is upon a just solution of this problem that the future peace of the world depends. Hungary has always feared an international and democratic solution of the problem, and it was this fear which bound her to Austria and Germany, in spite of her proud faith in her self-sufficiency. How firmly Hungary is bound to Austria and Germany is made clear by Count Andrassy ("liberal, pacifist, friend of England") in an article published in December, 1916, in the Revue Politique Internationale, a review for Magyar propaganda published at Lausanne, Switzerland, from which I quote the following:

> There are not, in Europe, two peoples of race and traditions whose community of interest is so evident and has taken so visible a form in the facts of history as the Germans and the Magyars; and Germany could not have a more sure ally than Hungary, if she is willing to trust us. Today Germany is nowhere more admired than among us. Our sympathies for Germany have grown keener during the war, and today to the sentiments of admiration which we feel towards the German people are added the glorious and tragic memories of bloodshed and fights fought in common. And the more this people become an object of hatred and calumny, the more we shall love it, because we are well aware that most of the accusations thrown in its face are prompted by envy and jealousy. . . .

It remains to consider the "practical policy," of making advances to a "democratic Hungary," with a view, not to detaching her from Austria (which is militarily impossible), but to forcing her to exercise pressure upon her Allies with a view to an early peace. I leave without discussion the morality of such a transaction. But I will permit myself to question the expediency of making such an advance to the "democratic Hungary." It must be admitted that a large part of the population of Austria-Hungary feels and thinks with the Allies. But these are neither the Austro-Germans nor the Magyars of Karolyi and Andrassy. They are the Czecho-Slovaks, the Jugoslavs (Serbs, Croats, Slovenes), and the Poles, the Italians and the Rumanians of Transylvania, our Allies on the other side of the enemy's lines, who, though obliged to fight in the ranks of their oppressors, do not cease, so far as it is in their power, to combat this same enemy on their "invisible front." They have succeeded in organizing some actual revolts. I may mention the twenty-eighth Czech Regiment which surrendered bodily to Russia, the Eighth, Thirtieth, Eighty-Eighth, One Hundred and Second, Eleventh regiment of Landwehr, in which every tenth man was shot, etc. Hundreds of thousands of Slav and Latin soldiers of the Austro-Hungarian army have deserted to the Russians, Serbs and Italians, and more than one hundred thousand of these former soldiers of the Emperor Charles are today fighting in the ranks of the Allies.

Thousands of these Jugoslavs, expatriated from their unfortunate country, have taken refuge in all the countries of the world, especially the United States, and now serve under the flags of the Allies in the Serbian, Russian, French, Canadian and New Zealand armies and, last but not least, in the army of this great Republic.

It is impossible to do full justice to the resolution of the civil population at home or to the courage of their political leaders, who have not ceased during the war to express the real sentiments of these oppressed peoples, their demand for emancipation from Magyar and German rule. Without speaking of the injustice which the proposed offer to Hungary would do to us Serbians and to our Italian and Rumanian allies, are we going to discourage the thirty million allies in the Austro-Hungarian Empire?

VOYSLAV M. YOVANOVITCH.

Washington, D. C.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Supremacy of the State

SIR: Your issue of September 15th has just reached me. I am grateful to you for printing my letter on the supremacy of the state, which was written before events in Russia had driven home its arguments, but I wish you had read it through more carefully before commenting on it, for most of your criticism is beside the point.

You seem to think I hold the antiquated Roman view that the political state ought to be the only form of corporate organization recognized within the community. Judging from the pains you have taken to refute it, there must still be some exponents of this doctrine in the United States, but I have never met one in this country. England has always been the home of group-loyalties—of religious sects, trade unions, colleges, coöperative societies, clubs and every imaginable form of corporate life. It has been part of her schooling in responsibility and self-government. Do we not all know that the battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton? In this sense, England was a syndicalist or, as Mr. Lippmann would say, a federal,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

country long before "syndicalism" was ever dreamt of. Long may she remain so! No one is a greater admirer than I am of the "public school spirit" or more anxious for the spread of what you call "industrial democracy"—that is, for the extension to commerce and industry of the professional sense of service and the corporate institutions which have done so much in other spheres to counteract the devastating selfishness of individualism.

All this is agreed ground between us. Our ground of difference is equally clear. In common with the vast mass of western opinion I hold that these various loyalties (loyalty to conscience alone excluded) ought not to be considered co-equal in their claim on the allegiance of the citizen of a democratic community. In case of conflict the right course for him, I consider, as it is also, under the conditions universally prevailing in the civilized world since the close of the Middle Ages, the lawful course, is to give precedence to the claim of the political state.

Why do I think this? Not out of obscurantism or academic orthodoxy, (though I confess I think you are the victim of a passing fad), but because of the supreme importance of the work which the political state has to do, and alone can do, for mankind. That work is the world-wide establishment and maintenance of justice and liberty. If I believed that justice and liberty could be established and maintained by the churches or the trade unions or the "international proletariat," I would gladly see the machinery of the political state scrapped and its authority divided between these other bodies. If you really believe this, say so outright and face the revolutionary consequences. Do not recoil in dismay at the discovery that, if indeed these bodies are to be equal in authority with the political state, you are creating two or more systems of public law in place of one and that the judiciary will have to interpret, and the police and army to enforce, the decisions of the industrial parliament and the various other authorized guilds or corporations. If you think this practicable, I venture to disagree; and I think most reflective people, especially in Russia, will be disposed to agree with me.

There is, of course, another line of escape open to you. Admitting that only the political state can secure justice and liberty, you can argue that these are relatively minor matters and do not constitute the foundation of our modern social existence. That also is a possible view held by many comfortable people who regard politics and social questions as a nuisance, but it is inconsistent with support of the present war and of the ideals, including the League of Nations, set forth for the settlement by the statesmen of the Allies and by yourself week by week. Again, if you think so, say so frankly, but do not halt between two opinions in different parts of your paper. International organization is an exceedingly difficult matter. It cannot be brought about by random talk. It will not be brought about at all unless the public opinion of the civilized world can be made to feel that the objects which it is designed to secure are of intense and vital importance to the human race. If they are not, our dead have died in vain. If they are, do not weaken the instrument by which alone they can be secured.

But, you say, the state is at present in Britain and America a "middle class institution," and the working classes have good reason to be dissatisfied with its working. I quite agree. But what is the moral to be drawn from this? Is it that the working class should secede from the republic, as the Roman plebs once seceded to the Aventine, and set up rival centres of power of its own which will inevitably come into conflict with the authority of the commonwealth? Or is it that the working class should join with other sections of the community in securing that the state carries out, at home and abroad, the work which it alone is in a position to perform? The first course, which you seem to be preaching, leads straight to anarchy and civil war. The second will probably lead to governments of a labor type in most modern countries as soon as the working class has fitted itself by education and training to cope with the responsibilities of the supreme power. The English labor party, which, as it is just announced, will contest 300 seats at the next election, has chosen the second course; and no friend of democracy can doubt that it has chosen wisely.

ALFRED E. ZIMMERN.

London.

What Shall He Read?

SIR: I am by profession a civil engineer and have been engaged for a few years past as a construction superintendent; although I hold a C. E. degree from the leading American university, I am wofully ignorant. To be more specific, I know nothing of politics, bonds, stocks, investments, financing corporations, economics, commercial law, transportation, banking, etc., etc.

In my own defense I will say I like to read good English composition and am rather catholic in my tastes. For example: New York Sun editorials, H. L. Mencken's articles in the Smart Set, J. B. Kerfoot's book reviews, the works of William J. Locke, also The New Republic.

As I said above, I am an engineer by profession and inclination. I am thirty-two years of age and beginning to be ashamed of making naïve answers to questions of real moment. I have passed the stage where engineering is considered "adventure" and want to go into training for an executive position.

So then, I appeal to you as of one crying in the wilderness. Will you please find some means of compiling a list of twenty or thirty books that might be of some use to such a dunderhead as I? If you can't print them in your periodical and are too busy to indite me a letter, please turn this letter over to some intelligent publishing firm or bookseller. In conclusion, I must caution you against the inference that I am a fool. My trouble comes entirely from apathy—not from lack of proper mental equipment.

T. G.

[NOTE: Letters sent The New Republic in answer to the above will be forwarded to T. G.]

That 8% Tax

SIR: A is an architect with three partners. Before the war he was making $10,000 a year. Now (1917) he makes $7,000, a loss of $3,000. He has a wife, but no children. His federal income and "war excess profits" taxes combined are at the rate of 8.86 per cent.

B does not work, but lives on the income from his inherited investments. He has a wife, but no children. Before the war his income was $25,000. By successful changes of investment his income in 1917 is $39,000, an increase of $14,000. His federal income tax rate (he is not subject to the "war excess profits" tax) is also 8.86 per cent.

M. WILLIAMS, JR.

Boston, Massachusetts.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

VERSE

How I Walked Alone in the Jungles of Heaven

Oh, once I walked in Heaven, all alone
Upon the sacred cliffs above the sky.
God and the angels, and the gleaming saints
Had journeyed out into the stars to die.

They had gone forth to win far citizens,
Bought at great price, bring happiness for all:
By such a harvest make a holier town
And put new life within old Zion's wall.

Each chose a far-off planet for his home,
Speaking of love and mercy, truth and right,
Envied and cursed, thorn-crowned and scourged in time,
Each tasted death on his appointed night.

Then resurrection day from sphere to sphere
Sped on, with all the POWERS arisen again,
While with them came in clouds recruited hosts
Of sun-born strangers and of earth-born men.

And on that day gray prophet saints went down
And poured atoning blood upon the deep,
Till every warrior of old Hell flew free
And all the torture fires were laid asleep.

And Hell's lost company I saw return
Clear-eyed, with plumes of white, the demons bold
Climbed with the angels now on Jacob's stair,
And built a better Zion than the old.

. . . . . .

And yet I walked alone on azure cliffs
A lifetime long, and loved each untrimmed vine:
The rotted harps, the swords of rusted gold
The jungles of all Heaven then were mine.

O mesas and throne-mountains that I found!
O strange and shaking thoughts that touched me there,
Ere I beheld the bright returning wings
That came to spoil my secret, silent lair!

VACHEL LINDSAY.

The Mathematician

Stranger alike to traffic's clamor crude
And to joy's throbbing, intricate design,
He stands serene. A formula, a line,
With changeless beauty is by him endued.
Striver for truth's perfection, no light mood
May move him. Differential, axiom, sign,
Bring to him glimpses of the far divine,
Marking the boundaries of finitude.

By Euclid's theorems cramped, he seeks new spheres,
And walks in high, far ways forever free,
Toils with awed vision through the ordered years,
Till, from the all-but-handled harmony,
In some grave vision Deity appears,
And in a graph he finds Eternity.

NELSON ANTRIM CRAWFORD.

Sea Dream

Sometimes at night a song comes flying
Among the shadowy fields in sleepers
Who waken to its sweet careering
Through their bodies' colour and grace:
Magic pierces to their hearing
With sounds that are not heard by day;
Silence, breaking from its keepers,
Flies and music takes its place.
Those who waken and hear it crying
Find it beats with tidal motion;
It is the blood within their clay,
Remembering its ancient ocean.

To hear such wild and dreamy strains
Borne past the dim shores of the veins
The heart stops short—then beats again,
So to keep the singing flowing
Through the lands that lie in men.
For in the song those thousand streams
Are telling of their ancient fountain.
The sea, with all its jewels glowing
And beauty running on the waves,
Or buried in the water-mountain
Where the sea Shape, snowy and old,
In deeps that mock the diver's wish,
Blood-blind with war and a hate untold,
Still dooms and tombs in his diamond caves
The silver navies of the fish;
And the cold sea-worm, all curled
About the bones of battle gleams.
"Long past," (the song runs), "left behind,
—But we remember all in dreams,—
The battles in the water world
Till the landward gates were passed.
Long since, all dim, long left behind,
The foes, the fangs, the hates at last
Buried in the water-mountain
With the nations of the blind."

Then the song changes and is young.
A new music leaps in birth,
Flying sweet in the veins of each,
Flooding through the body's earth,
Telling with the spirit's tongue
Of new seas lifting on another beach.
In the spirit, in the heart's deep places,
Those hidden seas increase:
The shining love from the eternal spaces
That beats on earth with surges soft as fleece
Fills them in silence from a tidal fountain.
Until the golden day shall gleam
When the red wells of hate are sealed,
Buried in the shining mountain
On the day of the heart's overflowing
When the earth is washed and healed,
And the lovers with the dream,
From ocean unto ocean going,
Shall lift at last into the living peace.

So the song tells, and much besides
Of glories in the blood's dim tides;
Much that no ear of dust can mark
Of marvels in the body's dark,
Singing of marvels in the body's dark.

RIDGELY TORRENCE.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Six American Poets

Tendencies in Modern American Poetry, by Amy Lowell. New York: The Macmillan Co. $2.50.

MOST laymen do not read poetry. They are scared. They have heard high-flown discussion about the poets. They have been checked by critics and chilled by professors and left flat by soaring spinsters. The thing has seemed too fragile for them to grasp, too precious for them to share, too ineffable, too beauteous. The priesthood of poetry has bulldozed them. An old game in every human specialty, the art of bulldozing the public has been carried further in poetry than in music or painting or sculpture or law or politics or science or militarism or religion. Carried further, because the medium in which poetry is written is the familiar medium of speech, and it took a greater skill on the part of the priesthood to exclude the common herd, to admit only those who have the high sign.

What I like best about Miss Amy Lowell is her impatience with this timid ignorance, her determination to do away with it and to compel the unpoetic public to walk up, walk up. Miss Lowell is the leader of a sort of Votes for Poetry movement. She is, in some important respects, a partisan poetic boss. She cajoles and browbeats for poetry, and especially for one brand of poetry labeled Imagistic. But the fine aspect of this powerful insistence on the rights of poetry, especially Imagist poetry, is the clear and detailed instructiveness that Miss Lowell reveals in this book. She establishes the humanity of her poets, in a literary world where the great pretense has always been that poetry is ineluctable. And she makes no demand for readers specially endowed and trained. To meet the ordinary extraordinary ignorance about poets and poetry nothing could be more useful and valuable. Whether or not the American renaissance is a fact, Miss Lowell's preliminary survey of current poetic activity brings a great deal of its material into consciousness, makes it more manageable and definite.

The mere task of selecting E. A. Robinson, Robert Frost, Edgar Lee Masters, Carl Sandburg, "H. D." and John Gould Fletcher, required a courage that most critics do not possess. Miss Lowell regrets that she had to pass over Louis Untermeyer, James Oppenheim, Ezra Pound, Vachel Lindsay, William Rose Benét and Eunice Tietjens. Passing over someone, however, was an act necessary to the completion of her work. One great handicap to the understanding of current American poetry is the welter of creeds, the disorder of practices, the multiplicity of effort. Any choice in this confusion is a good choice, and only a Miss Lowell could risk it—only a person, that is to say, who felt above everything the necessity of mapping in some fashion and with some clarity a new and dazing world.

But the success of this volume is much more in its setting forth of individual poets, it seems to me, than in any orientation of tendencies or any real discernment of a movement. It is as one who has emotions for specific performance rather than as a theorist, a philosopher of culture, a person of durable general ideas, that Miss Lowell has contributed to understanding by this volume. She has a great deal to say throughout her book of a "movement"; and this movement, we are given to understand, has three stages, the third and final of which is Imagism. But these three stages seem to me to remain three separate points in space, points with an interstitial hollowness around them through which Miss Lowell's "movement" goes plunging to a dark and melancholy doom. How does the poetic connection swing from E. A. Robinson and Robert Frost to the two Chicagoans, and how from Chicago to the London Imagists, "H. D." and John Gould Fletcher? Miss Lowell speaks vaguely of a "new paganism." "The 'new paganism' which raises science to the emotional level of a religion, is achieved with difficulty by one only lately freed from the shackles of a hampering superstition." But is there any demonstrated progression, tendency, movement, toward a poetic reconcilement with the crudeness of existing America on the basis of a "new paganism" or a new idealism or a new anything else? It may be said in passing that John Gould Fletcher and "H. D." are much more in the asylum of culture, much more nostalgic and withdrawn and renunciatory, than the incorrigible Masters or Sandburg. But the ambitious essay that is offered as a preface to this volume is sufficiently incoherent and immature to make one highly suspicious of Miss Lowell the philosopher. Her aim in this essay is to link up our poetry with the war, and she argues in this way: "The so-called 'new movement' in American poetry is evidence of the rise of a native school." We are "ourselves, different from all other peoples whatsoever." "It is this realization of ourselves that has drawn us into an understanding sympathy with our allies hardly to be conceived of before. And let us make no mistake; such a result cannot be reached through a devotion to the teachings of materialism." "Long before the travail of battle flung itself over the world, the travail of this idealism began." "Literature is rooted in life," and so in this idealistic evolution. "At the moment of writing, it is America who has taken the last, most advanced step." "We who watch realize something of the grandeur of conception toward which this evolution is working." "The modern poets are less concerned with dogma and more with truth. They see in the universe a huge symbol . . . all falling into place in a vast plan, the key to which is natural science."

As one of the founders of Imagism Miss Lowell subscribed to the dogma, "We believe that poetry should render particulars exactly and not deal in vague generalities, however magnificent and sonorous. It is for this reason that we oppose the cosmic poet, who seems to us to shirk the real difficulties of his art." It is a pity that this excellent poetic principle could not have applied to Miss Lowell's half-baked preface and to most of her talk about a new "movement." But when Miss Lowell is not busy with amateurish ethnology and "atavism" and evolution and pseudo-science, she is one of the best expositors that modern poetry could have. And it is for her sympathetic exposition of the things she likes rather than her ineffectual announcement of a system and a touchstone that her book deserves to be read.

In writing biographically of her six poets, Miss Lowell adopts a kind of interpretation that the more timid public is sure to understand. The attractive aspect of it is her own high biographic skill. In dealing with Mr. Robinson and Mr. Frost it is not unnatural that a New Englander should feel the romance of these "disinherited Puritans." But Miss Lowell is equally moving and sensitive about the Illinois background of Edgar Lee Masters and of Carl Sandburg, the Oklahoma setting of John Gould Fletcher and the London atmosphere in which "H. D." (Miss Hilda Doolittle, now Mrs. Aldington) "bourgeoned." A great deal of the charm with which Miss Lowell invests these six poets is her account of the surroundings of their childhood. It is not merely a documentation quite in keeping with modern psychology. It suggests the romance of their endowment in a beautiful and telling way. Hamilton Wright Mabie might have done it, one fears, as he might easily have made many of the platitudinous observations

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that besprinkle this book, but the result is a roundness, a tangible presence, which establishes each poet in one's personal sympathy and gives his poetry human roots.

When Miss Lowell says that Mr. Robinson's poems "do not invigorate," that "poetry is the most powerful way in which thought can be presented," that "North of Boston is a very sad book," that "natural bents are often too strong for parental regulation," that Edgar Lee Masters is Dostoevsky in vers libre, that he "sees life from the standpoint of the novelist," that "the worst teaching of modern sociology would seem to be its insistence upon material rather than spiritual welfare," and so on, a dismal incredulity swamps the reader. Is this Chautauquan moralist, this literal-minded platitudinarian, an Imagist poet? But when one searches the definitions of Imagism, and discovers that they are merely an attempt to do to poetry what the label "Rubberset" is supposed to do to shaving-brushes—establish a trade-name and the prestige that goes with it—one abandons all lavish expectancy. It is then that Miss Lowell's service as a painstaking and perceptive critic is likely to be estimated properly, no matter how much one dislikes the pretensions of Imagism and is inclined to be snobbish with a snob.

As to Mr. Masters and the propagandistic Mr. Sandburg, Miss Lowell seems to me least perceptive. She mistakes the groping of Masters for instability. Despite coherent Spoon River, she says his mind "glitters, but it is without cohesion." And she shudders at his Chicago, "brutal, coarse, revolting." "Within certain limits," however, she grants him extraordinary vision, as, within limits, she praises Robinson ("'cribbed, cabin'd and confined'"), Frost ("his canvas is exceedingly small"), and "H. D." ("a narrow art, it has no scope, it neither digs deeply nor spreads widely"). But under-appreciation is not a defect of this volume. Miss Lowell's services to poetry (mentioned on pages 103, 131, 254, 298) show where her heart is, and her hundreds of quotations (filling a third of the volume) are the best evidence of the warmth of her response. She has not made a formidable case for the "movement" she is assuming. She has not argued it deeply or resourcefully, or proved that the Imagists are in succession to the poets of revolutionary spirit. But the feeling she has for poetry is so genuine and catholic and instructed, and her acquaintance with modern activity so energetic, that she is one of the most interesting and illuminating persons with whom to visit the new poets, led by the hand.

F. H.

The Wonder

The Wonder, by J. D. Beresford. New York: G. H. Doran Co. $1.40.

I READ The Wonder because of the aversion to it felt by a friend who was reading it. "This is the most disagreeable book I ever read," he would say. "What is it about?" "About a child who isn't a child. It's damn unpleasant."

Not the prodigious child, but the attitude of my friend and of others more or less like him is the theme of the story, the attitude of normal persons towards the abnormal or anomalous, in this case towards the double freak of a man's mind in an infant and the mind at that of a superman.

We are introduced to the superman in a railway carriage. He is a year and nine months old and he is being held in his mother's lap like a priceless piece of earthenware. With a stare of calm intelligence he scrutinizes the passengers. Released from the child's gaze the first passenger felt his muscles relax. The next passenger to be appraised fidgeted and as the child let him go he looked at a fellow passenger with a silly vacuous smile. The next passenger, a prosperous rubicund man, was bolder. "A very remarkable child, ma'am," he said. "Er—does it—er—can it talk?"—"No, sir, he's never made a sound."—"Never cried?"—"Never once, sir."—"Dumb, eh?"—"'E's never spoke, sir."—"How!" The man braced himself with a deliberate and obvious effort. "It is—he—not water on the brain—what?" Mother and child descend from the train and the six remaining passengers draw a sigh of relief and break suddenly into general conversation. "Water on the brain; I don't care what any one says," asserted the rubicund man. . . . "My sister had one very similar . . . it died." . . . "Ought not to exhibit freaks like that in public." . . . "You're right, sir . . . them things ought to be kep' private." "They spoke as the survivors from some common peril; they were increasingly anxious to demonstrate that they had never suffered intimidation, and in their relief they were anxious to laugh at the thing which had for a time subdued them. But they never named it as a cause for fear."

When he was just over two years old this "very remarkable child" drives his father from home. George Stott, ex-cricketer and at one time the best known man in England, had often said, "he wouldn't stand it much longer," but the crisis of determination was not reached until one evening on his return home Stott found his chair,

TIFFANY & Co.
JEWELERS, SILVERSMITHS, STATIONERS
THE FINEST MERCHANDISE AND
A SERVICE OF EXCEPTIONAL MERIT
FIFTH AVENUE AND 37TH STREET
NEW YORK

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the sacred arm chair dedicated by custom to his sole use, occupied by his son. "Look 'ere! Get out!" he said. "That's *my* chair!" . . . . The child sat calm, motionless. . . . Stott's arms fell to his sides again, he shuffled his feet . . . "God damn," he muttered . . . and went out into the night. On his return, he resolved to leave home permanently, "I've 'ad enough," he began. "I'm sorry it's come to this, George," said Ellen Mary, his wife. . . . "Of course I've seen it a-comin', and I knowed it *'ad* to be, some time. . . . I don't expec' you to understand 'im, no more'n I do myself—it isn't in nature as you should. . . ." That night Stott, like the railway passengers, gave a deep sigh of relief. "Shan't never see 'im again, thank Gawd!" As he fell asleep he wondered why he had ever been afraid of the child. "After all, 'e's only a blarsted freak."

Having demolished the patriarchate, the child's next notable encounter is with the church. One day when he is four years old his ecclesiastical godfather meets him alone on the common. "At the end of my instruction," narrates the clergyman to the county magnate, "the child, still looking away from me, shook his head and said that what I had told him was not true. I confess that I was staggered. Possibly I lost my temper, somewhat. I may have grown rather warm in my speech. And at last . . .' Crashaw clenched his hands and spoke in such a low voice that Challis could hardly hear him. 'At last he turned to me and said things which I could not possibly repeat, which I pray that I may never hear again from the mouth of any living being.' 'Profanities, obscenities, er—swear-words,' suggested Challis. 'Blasphemy, *blasphemy*,' cried Crashaw—'Oh! I wonder that I did not injure the child.'" As it is, he is only asking to have the child certified as an idiot and sent to an asylum.

In support of this plan the clergyman urges that the influence of the child might be malignant, a theory of maleficent possession he had long since imparted with successful results to his parishioners. On the occasion in question, however, somewhat different tactics are called for and so "he brought his arguments to a head by saying that the example of a child four years old, openly defying a minister of the Church, and repudiating the very conception of the Deity, was an example which might produce a profound effect upon the minds of a slow-thinking people"—given the revolutionary tendency towards socialism.

Failing in his effort to restrain the child through an asylum, as the next best the Rev. Crashaw plans to send the child to school. Meanwhile Challis, the county magnate who is also an anthropologist, has given the child the run of his library, starting him on dictionary and encyclopædia, a survey of human knowledge which the child completes in less than four weeks. The child's examination by the school board to see if it is true, as Challis says, that the child is in no need of schooling is as keen a satire on educational authority, I believe, as ever was written. And yet the satire, here as elsewhere, is kept subordinate to the main purpose, describing the effect of the wonder child upon others. "Extraordinary powers of memory. . . . It isn't facts, but what they stand for that I . . . Don't know his Bible—that's good enough for me. . . . Heresy, heresy. . . . An astounding memory, of course, quite astounding, but——" . . . "Each was endeavoring to circumscribe the powers of the child they had just left—each was insistent on some limitation he chose to regard as vital."

So much for the educators, lay and ecclesiastic. It is the turn of the scientists. Lewes, the Cambridge undergraduate who is to specialize in psychology, wills from the outset to ignore the psychological wonder under his eyes. While the child is engaged in his encyclopædic study Lewes insists he is shamming. The evidence accumulates, but Lewes retains his supercilious attitude to the end. Even more thorough is the self-protective attitude of Grossman, the great authority on biologic variability who is to become the unique figure and representative of twentieth century science. Grossman's final reference to his interview with the child, the single reference to the Wonder in the literature of the world, constitutes a footnote to the second edition of his brochure entitled An Explanation of Certain Intellectual Abnormalities reported in History. It reads: "I recently examined a similar case of abnormality in England, but found that it presented no such marked divergence from the type as would demand serious investigation."

The German scientist, masterful and undeterred, is an easy victim of satire. So too is his more genial English controversialist who would exploit the wonder child in support of a pet theory of eugenics. Challis, the anthropologist, is reserved for a finer weapon. Before his impressive interview with the child, Challis is open minded to the adventure. "Here are you and I," he says to Lewes, "busying ourselves in an attempt to throw some little light—a very little it must be—on some petty problems of the origin of our race . . . [while] here is living a child who may revolutionize our conceptions of time and space." Challis is open minded and he is honest too—up to a point. "One does not like to feel," he confesses, "that a child of four and a half has greater intellectual powers than oneself. Candidly, I do not like it at all." And yet Challis not only protects the child against his persecutors, he feels qualms against inducting him into "the prison of knowledge." Challis is generous, intelligent, appreciative, and—only a dilettante. Once his own adjustment to life is disturbed, he, too, like all the others, seeks cover. Despite his apparent devotion to science, "he had another stake in the world which, at the last analysis, he valued more highly than the acquisition of knowledge. Those means of ease, of comfort, of liberty, of opportunity to choose his work among various interests, were the ruling influence of his life." Exposed to the mind of the Wonder, Challis realized that this mind, if encouraged, "would mean the end of research, philosophy, all the mystery, idealism, and joy of life." And so Challis turns his back on the child, literally for a time and intellectually forever. He was afraid, he put it into words himself, of the finality the child suggested; Challis clung to the mystery of the unknown. He wanted to find out, he did not want to know. "You and your kind," the laconic child had said to him, "have no interest in truth."

Challis has the last word and makes the last picture, for it is the scalp of the scientist we are after, not the head of the much beheaded religionist. And it is to that end perhaps that the logical consummation of the tale is foregone—a picture of the funeral conducted by the child's murderer. Perhaps too it was realized that the spirit of satire could be rendered too terribly crushing for its body. Indeed throughout the book we feel restraint. The child is never turned into an expounder of the writer's philosophy—a temptation others might not resist, Wells, for example, at least latterly. Only the quality of the child's mind is suggested, little or no attempt is made to describe his system of thought. The abstinence is of course not merely an abstinence of art but of prudence, a refusal to attempt

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

YALE WAR BOOKS

More than five hundred Yale men received their commissions as officers of Field Artillery in the first series of Training Camps. There could hardly be a more practical demonstration of the value of the work done in New Haven by Captain Robert M. Danford and the other officers detailed there by the United States Government.

Their success was the more remarkable because they lacked many things in the way of equipment which would have made instruction easier. Among other needs which they recognized was that of a book that would supply the student in a single volume with the latest information on all the important Field Artillery subjects taught at the School of Fire. In

NOTES ON TRAINING

FIELD ARTILLERY DETAILS

Captain (now Lieutenant Colonel) Robert M. Danford and Captain (now Major) Onorio Moretti prepared a text which the *Army and Navy Journal* describes as "the one manual we know on the training of officers, non-commissioned officers and enlisted men in the duties devolving upon the various members of the battery and battalion commander's details."

The above may in part explain the demand which has necessitated four printings within four months of publication—a total of twenty thousand volumes. *Price $2.00 net.*

As a further help to Artillery officers and men training for service "Somewhere in France," Professor Edward Bliss Reed, formerly Regimental Sergeant Major, 10th F.A.N.G.Ct., has prepared a list of

SEVEN HUNDRED FRENCH TERMS FOR AMERICAN FIELD ARTILLERYMEN

The little book has been carefully compiled in consultation with the American and French officers at the School of Fire for Field Artillery, Fort Sill, Okla. The book is bound in flexible cloth covers of the right size to fit in the tunic pocket. *Price 40 cents net.*

Among the French authors who have made us feel most strongly the spirit of the French boy officers who have been defending the cause in which we have now joined them, the name of Maurice Barrès is probably most prominent. In

THE UNDYING SPIRIT OF FRANCE

he has sketched briefly and tellingly the careers of some of the young French officers in action. It is an account which needs no imagination on the part of the reader to stir him with enthusiasm for our French allies. *Price 80 cents net.*

One of the earlier war books is still in constant demand so much so that it has again been necessary to put it on the press. THE DIPLOMATIC BACKGROUND OF THE WAR, 1870-1914, by Charles Seymour, is now in its fifth printing. *Price $2.00 net.*

YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS

120 College Street, New Haven, Conn. — 280 Madison Avenue, New York City

WM. B. CLARK, President

A prominent business man writes:

"Our values have greatly increased. We must carry more fire insurance.

"Please give the 'Ætna Fire' all it will take on our property.

"The rate is no more, and this is a time when we wish to have an Ætna Insurance Co. Policy."

Losses Paid in 98 Years Over

$157,000,000

AGENTS AT ALL IMPORTANT POINTS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the impossible. And yet, given any personal experience of the wonderful in mentality, is one not well aware that the mind of unusual quality does not lend itself, like the mind of unusual ability, to convincing quotation? "He is too many thousands of years ahead of us," Challis had said of the wonder child; "if a revelation were made to us, we should not understand it."

But it is not after all the mind of the wonder child that is our subject, rather is it, as we have noted already, the effect his mind produces on other minds and in particular the emotional defenses they resort to—scepticism, anger, indifference, denial, the release given by such philosophic classification as Challis developed or by worship like that of Ellen Mary. Not that these defenses or safeguards are not necessary—herein lies the final irony of the story. When the worshipful mother is disillusionized by the child's death, she goes insane; the child's biographer in learning his unexampled lesson of humility begins to lose hold on reality and to see himself in delirious vision. There is but one creature for whom no mental safeguard is required, he with no mind to safeguard—the village idiot who had sought the child as a playmate and who alone of all the villagers was not relieved by the passing of him now referred to as that "poor little boy of Mrs. Stott's."

Was the dead son of another Mary ever analogously referred to? Now and again in elusive realism possible analogies in the life of Jesus are hinted at, analogies which are never pressed—from that pitfall the author is saved by his understanding of how only in little flashes historical analogy may appeal to the imagination. But for the familiar and barren query, "What would happen if Jesus appeared on earth today?", Beresford plainly substitutes in effect the more stimulating query, "What would have to happen today to produce the effect Jesus once produced?" Science, not religion, is our modern faith. Iconoclasm must be set not in religious but in scientific terms to arouse dismay and hostility. The questioner of human achievement or culture is the sceptic who irritates; the denier of social progress, the unforgivable atheist. We hold with Challis that "our work is to add knowledge little by little, data here and there, for future evidence." To protect this creed we all might go far.

E. C. P.

Recent Publications

The Rebirth of Russia, by Isaac Marcosson. New York: John Lane Co. $1.25.

MR. MARCOSSON says truly in the introduction that he is a reporter, not a historian; but he has given us a very interesting book. The incredulous delight of the people when they are joined by the army at the outset of the revolution, the funeral of the victims, the hatred borne towards the police, and the abdication of the Czar are wonderfully well portrayed in this account of the Russian revolution. The sobriety and joyous light-hearted agreeableness of the revolutionaries are sharply contrasted to their previous long-suffering patience. But it is a pity that Mr. Marcosson deals so slightly, and slightingly, with two outstanding items of universal interest: The Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates gets rather shabby treatment from him; one can only gather that he does not approve of it. And Rasputin—that strange, mysterious man is passed over with a few adjectives, "cruel, sensual, crafty." To contradict these we are given a photograph of Rasputin. Spiritual and ascetic are the words one would apply to the face which curiously resembles the Christ head we are all so familiar with. Of tremendous interest are the sketches of Lvoff, Milyukoff, and of Guchkoff, who dictated the abdication of the Czar, and the other members of the Provisional Government. The long intimate sketch of Kerensky pictures a man consumed by the flame of his ideal.

The History of Medieval Europe, by Lynn Thorndike. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. $2.75.

THE general editorship of Professor J. T. Shotwell would of itself be sufficient guaranty of the merit of this new text-book. But Professor Thorndike has created a volume which on its intrinsic merit could easily meet critical examination. It is profuse, after the manner of the newer historical text-books, in explanatory maps, suggestive bibliographies and charts. The style escapes the rigid narrative baldness of the compressed history for the classroom, yet it does not sacrifice accuracy to vivacity. There is a nice balance between economic, social and political factors—the true modern honesty before the infinite complexities of growth. Professor Thorndike tells the facts as a continuous, interwoven single story, for the separation into nationalistic groups while inadequate enough even for modern history becomes for the middle ages almost distortion.

In Happy Valley, by John Fox, Jr. New York: C. Scribners' Sons. $1.35.

THIS collection of short stories teems with interest. Mr. Fox knows how to capture the sometimes primitive instinct and passions of the hard-working, impoverished lives of the people of Happy Valley. They are tender as in The Goddess of Happy Valley; humorous, in the Battle prayer of Parson Small; human, in the Angel from Viper, and tragic in His Last Christmas Gift. At all times they appear as the stories of real people, with their narrow, set views vigorously opposed to anything new, thus making the problem of assisting them more than difficult. Mr. Fox has made these people lovable in this happy addition to his work.

Contributors

to this issue

WILLIAM HARD is a writer on public affairs, now investigating problems of organization in Washington for The New Republic. He is the author of The Women of Tomorrow.

LEE SIMONSON is a graduate of Harvard University. He has written articles on art for various periodicals and has been doing scenic work with the Washington Square Players.

CHARLES P. HOWLAND is a New York lawyer who has been president of the Public Education Association of New York City and an active member of the American Rights Committee.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED